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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to describe some general relationships between the concepts of literary genre and writing style. The discussion concentrates on the following topics: (1) possible classification schemes for genres, including stylistic aspects associated with each scheme; (2) concepts from literary criticsm that are related to both genre and style; and (3) current work in linguistics and stylistics that is relevant to the relationship between genre and style and holds promise for eventually clarifying both concepts and the interrelationships between them. The bulk of the paper--three appendixes--offers a comprehensive alphabetical listing of literary generic terms, an extensive glossary of literary genres, and a taxonomy of generic forms (including both literary and nonliterary types). (RL)

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LITERARY GENRES AND STYLE

Helen Ajay

ABSTRACT

The paper describes the general relationships between the concepts of genre and writing style, and concentrates on the following topics: (1) possible classification schemes for genres, including stylistic aspects associated with each scheme; (2) concepts from literary criticism that are related to both genre and style; (3) some current work in linguistics and stylistics that is relevant to the relationship between genre and style and holds promise for eventually clarifying both concepts and the interrelationships between them.

There are three appendixes to the paper: (1) a comprehensive alphabetical listing of literary generic terms; (2) a glossary of literary genres; (3) a taxonomy of generic forms (including both literary and non-literary types).

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LITERARY GENRES AND STYLE

Helen Ajay

A genre is a literary classification, a "culturally definable, traditional type of communication" (Enkvist, 1973, p. 20), one of the types of categories into which literary works may be grouped according to form or technique. The major literary genres are tragedy, comedy, epic, satire, lyric, novel, essay, biography, but--as is apparent from an examination of the appendixes to this paper--an extraordinary number of more or less distinct forms (strictly speaking, "subgenres") have been identified and labeled. Many of these genres are associated with a specific, sometimes brief, historical period, having come into use in response to the requirements or tastes of a particular society. The masque, for example, was admirably suited for the entertainment of court society, offering not only diversion and the opportunity for extravagant display, but also the chance for members of the court to participate in the spectacle themselves. Although full-blown examples of such genres are rarely or never found in modern works, these historical forms are nevertheless significant, since authors of every literary period have made use of elements from older forms.[1]

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[1] An example of an ancient genre is the pastoral elegy, which was well over a thousand years old when Milton exploited its evocative and highly-stylized forms, themes, and conventions in "Lycidas," a classic representative of the type. In our modern period, echoes of the elegaic form are found in Whitman's poem on Lincoln, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd." The two greatest poets of this century, W.H. Auden and T.S. Eliot, have made frequent use of age-old poetic ingredients; examples are Auden's experimentation with the Old English verse line, rhyme schemes, and epithets, and Eliot's use of themes as old as Christianity that were once embodied in medieval mystery plays.

The purpose of this paper is to describe some general relationships between the concept of genre and writing style. The diversity of approaches to the complex notion of style (Ajay, TN 2-74-05) makes straightforward allusions to "style" in any context impossible. Worse, there is no well-developed theory of genre, either in literary criticism or in stylistics. The strongest framework available for talking about genre is the work of Aristotle, and we still distinguish among important literary forms using criteria and labels devised by the Greeks. Northrop Frye, who, in his Anatomy of Criticism (1957) made a valiant and virtuoso attempt to impose some order on the current profusion of generic types (many of which are composite forms not lending themselves easily to classification), presents a dismal picture of the state-of-the-art in criticism with regard to genre:

> We discover that the critical theory of genres is stuck precisely where Aristotle left it. The very word "genre" sticks out in an English sentence as the unpronounceable and alien thing it is. Most critical efforts to handle such generic terms as "epic" and "novel" are chiefly interesting as examples of the psychology of rumor. Thanks to the Greeks, we can distinguish tragedy from comedy in drama, and so we still tend to assume that each is the half of drama that is not the other half. When we come to deal with such forms as the masque, opera, movie, ballet, puppet-play, morality, commedia dell-arte, and Zauberspiel, we find ourselves in the position of the Renaissance doctors who refused to treat syphilis because Galen said nothing about it
>
> (P. 13)

A frontal attack to systematize genre is likely to prove futile. However, from the perspective of instructional design and development the rubric may be addressed with a good deal more precision than heretofore. This discussion follows from that perspective. It centers on the following: (1) possible classification schemes for genres, (2) concepts

from literary criticism that are related to both genre and style, and (3) some current work in linguistics and stylistics that is relevant to the relationship between genre and style and holds promise for eventually clarifying both concepts and the interrelationships between them.

Classification of Genres

At one time, the traditional broad generic categories (tragedy, comedy, epic, satire, lyric, rhetorical modes) were considered fixed types. The existence of some relationship between genre and style had been noted by Aristotle, and he and later writers (up to the Romantic period) devised criteria for specifying the subject, structure, style, and effect appropriate to each literary kind. Early students of literary theory even found it possible to rank genres in order of importance, placing epic and tragedy in the highest positions. However, the emergence of new and important forms such as the novel, and the yoking of different forms in single works have contributed to an ever greater diffusion of the borders of generic categories. In addition to these developments, forms once thought relatively inferior, especially the lyric, have risen greatly in prestige over the centuries, so that no modern critic or scholar would attempt to rank the broad generic categories on the basis of "importance" or quality. Instead, it is recognized that literary form is related to the purpose behind a given work, so that no one form or group of forms is inherently of greater value than another. The consensus among contemporary scholars is that generic labels are convenient but rather arbitrary ways of classifying literary works, particularly in our own period of complex generic forms.

Prose and Verse. Bearing all this in mind, genres may nevertheless be sorted in a number of different ways, all of which have stylistic implications. A basic distinction is between prose and verse forms. In verse, the unit of sound is of great importance and this emphasis is perhaps what most distinguishes poetry from prose. Rhythm, a quality present in both verse and prose, is a part of this sound quality of a text. One distinction between prose and most English poetry is the difference in the way rhythm is achieved: in poetry, rhythm is determined by the metric pattern, while in prose, word arrangement brings about the rhythmic effect.

In setting out to produce a written work, the choice of genre, it is generally agreed, will be a decision made very early in the writing process. Sometimes, the choice of genre and the decision to use prose or verse are simultaneous, as the decision to write a novel commits one to the use of prose, since the use of prose is one of the defining characteristics of the novel. Sometimes the decisions are made separately: a broad generic category (e.g., drama) is first selected and then a more specific subcategory (e.g., poetic drama) is decided upon. The selection of a genre and the decision to use prose or verse are both greatly influenced by the intended purpose of the text. For example, the lyric verse forms are best suited for the expression of heightened emotion focused on a limited (specific) intellectual theme. The relative brevity of these forms guards the emotional intensity, for it is not possible to sustain a high level of feeling throughout a lengthy text without diffusing or even completely counteracting the desired effect. The

structure and brevity of the lyric, however, also preclude the presentation of any complex intellectual argument in the form. The emphasis in the lyric is on emotional rather than reasoned considerations. The lyric develops its point indirectly--through rhythms, metaphor, rhyming, shape--rather than straightforwardly through a clear and logical progression of ideas, and enforces a slow pace on the reader that enables and encourages him to attend to the language being used as well as to the content of the message, and to appreciate the simultaneity and pattern of the different literary devices. On the other hand, it has been argued that "exact thinking on any subject demands prose" (Murry, p. 58). If one result of verse is the focusing of attention on the language being used, this quality is an obstruction to the efficient and straightforward transmission of complex ideas. Frye says (1957, p. 265):

> ...prose by itself is a transparent medium: it is at its purest...when it is least obtrusive and presents its subject matter like plate glass in a shop window...a highly mannered prose is not sufficiently flexible to do the purely descriptive work of prose: it continually oversimplifies and oversymmetrizes its material.

Not all the ramifications resulting from the selection of prose or verse as the form for a work are immediately apparent. One subtle example, of stylistic significance: in poetry, the length of the verse line is under the conscious control of the writer. The point at which he chooses to end each line presumably has some significance for the scheme of the poem, since it is done deliberately. However, the continuity of the prose form has this result: the point at which a prose line ends is not an artistic consideration but is the result of

mechanical factors like typesize and page size. Writers have long recognized that it is possible to spoil the rhythms or otherwise destroy the effect of a prose sentence by putting an emphatic word at the wrong place in a line. The poet has different but often more difficult problems. He must control verse shape, rhythm, meter, rhyme, subject matter, emotive aspects, syntax, all in such a way that the textual features unite in one satisfying, harmonious, and seemingly inevitable whole.

Prose is more flexible than verse, but lacks the associative concentration of the verse form (the happy result of the successful simultaneous control of all the textual characteristics just mentioned). Prose predominates in fiction because of its flexibility and because its greater continuity lends itself to the development of character and plot. At various times, fiction writers have tried to imbue their prose with something of this associative power of verse (thus gaining some of the advantages of both forms), but the technical problems surrounding this enterprise are enormous. Frye (1957, pp. 297-298) singles out Flaubert and Joyce as two among the very few writers who have attempted this with some degree of success. The greater versatility of prose is apparent in that this writing form spans both literary and non-literary genres (see below), but verse forms are found only among the literary genres--a fact of some stylistic significance.

Literary and Non-Literary Genres. Genres may also be dichotomized into literary (or "imaginative") and non-literary forms. Again, the distinction between the two types lies mainly in the purpose of the

writing. Very generally, and with the qualification that most works contain elements of more than one genre, non-literary forms are written with the major intention being to describe, inform, or persuade; the entertainment of the audinece or the self-expression of the writer may be considerations, but these are not the primary considerations in non-literary works.

The writer of non-literary pieces is largely concerned with getting his message across. He makes liberal use of redundant clues to the content of the message; he formulates his argument logically (or pretends to); he is inclined to use the familiar jargon of the discipline underlying his topic; he tends to avoid the temptation to let his private "voice" obstruct or distract from the content of the message. He relies on the reader's desire for information or guidance to maintain interest through the duration of the text.

The creative (i.e., "literary" in this context) writer must inspire and sustain the reader's interest without proffering the practical benefits that motivate the readers of non-literary works. The literary artist attends more to the resources of language and experiments with and explores the range of language, unburdened by the urgency of content that constrains the non-literary writer. The literary artist can display his own personality, if he chooses, without embarrassment; or he can put on the persona of a character to speak his words or to present opinions and feelings quite different from his own. The literary writer has greater leisure in the development of his text, but his problem is to maintain reader interest. He may tell a story, using

the continuity of plot development and the suspenseful buildup to a climax to lure the reader on. He may cultivate a personal style that is both pleasing and compelling. He can use imagery and metaphor freely --something the non-literary writer undertakes with greater risk to his message. In lengthy works like the novel or drama, the writer can change tones and voices, explore a variety of topics, shift from dialogue to monologue or narration, change points of view, present the thoughts of characters as well as their speech and actions--all calculated in part to jolt the audience's awareness and keep them reading or listening.

Finally, the orientation or "world view" behind a literary work is usually very different from that underlying a work written for practical ends. In literary works, the reference is to a world of imaginative fiction, whereas, in scholarly, journalistic, and scientific writing the reference is to the real world. Because fiction is based on an artificial world created by the author, we expect certain things from it that we do not expect of non-fiction works. Of these expectations, the major one is internal consistency, and coherence may be the principal criterion in evaluating a literary work. Each important thread developed in the literary work must be somehow resolved by the time the text ends; no loose ends can remain. In addition, we expect a balance and harmony in the literary work which might be incompatible with a true representation of real life, which often does not follow any logical or orderly pattern.

Prose genres are somewhat easier to categorize on the basis of their subject matter than are verse forms. Non-literary genres in particular are more amenable to classification on the basis of topics than are literary forms.

Spoken and Written Discourse. Genres may be sorted into those types intended for oral presentation and those intended for reading by the audience. (There is a third possibility that will only be mentioned in passing: gesture. The pantomime is the only genre that relies totally on gesture, although all dramatic forms and many other oral forms depend to some extent on non-verbal devices in presenting their message.) Note that oral genres do not at all cover the range of speech presented orally, but only those types of speech that have been planned in advance, may be written down, but rely in part for their maximum effect in being presented aloud (spoken, sung, acted, chanted) rather than read. Examples are speeches, sermons, songs, the drama. Spencer and Gregory (Enkvist, Spencer, and Gregory, 1964, pp. 85-91) discuss the stylistic implications arising from what they term the "mode" of discourse--i.e., "the dimension which accounts for the linguistic differences which result from the distinction between spoken and written discourse." Complexities arise because of the often blurred boundaries of spoken and written forms. In the poetic genres, authors may be very conscious of the spoken mode though they are in fact writing (Enkvist, 1973, p. 59). Such rhetorical devices in poetry as "invocation" (a direct address to a god or muse) and "apostrophe" (a direct address to an absent person or to an abstract or inanimate entity) may be part of

the modal dimension of style. Also, as noted above, novelists and dramatists often attempt to produce the illusion of natural (unplanned) speech or even thought in their works.

Relationship between Writer and Audience. It is possible to categorize genres on the basis of the relationship between author and audience at the time of the presentation of the work to the audience. Frye (1957, pp. 248-249) attempted such a classification of literary genres, identifying four broad categories:

1. Drama: The author is concealed from his audience and speaks indirectly, through his characters.
2. "Epos" (defined as works presented orally--that is, recited rather than acted): The author confronts the audience directly; the characters are concealed.
3. Written narrative: Both the author and the characters are concealed from the audience.
4. Lyric poetry: The audience is concealed from the author (the author often seems to be conversing with himself).

Each of these situations will present its own range of stylistic resources and limitations to the author. Some of the stylistic contrasts among these generic categories will be the result of the differences in mode of discourse mentioned above. In addition, the categories differ in the extent to which they allow the artist to "distance" himself from his work. This distancing (or "negative capability," as Keats termed it) is considered a desirable quality (especially in modern criticism), since the writer who masters this technique achieves a work that is

more independent of the author's personality (or seemingly so) and more subtle in its presentation.

Chronology. With the exception of the prose-verse distinction, chronological classification of genres presents the fewest problems of any of the classification schemes discussed here. Arrangement of genres in chronological order has some merit for the study of style in that it provides an initial basis for tracing the development of generic forms and noting the juxtaposition of forms at the same point in time. Frye especially emphasizes the continuity of literary history and its importance in determining both the shape of new works and the ability and inclination of audiences to understnad and accept what is produced. Frye's claim is that the longevity of many of the elements of very old forms attests to their inherent evocative power and that use of these ancient formulas compels some response from the audience, usually a favorable one in that the audience finds satisfaction in consciously or unconsciously recognizing an old theme or device and, once recognizing it, having their expectations about it fulfilled while experiencing the literary work. Elaborate arguments along this line are developed by Frye (1965) in A Natural Perspective and by Graves (1966) in The White Goddess.

Chronological arrangement of generic forms makes it possible to determine the lineage of a form, and large "family trees" of genres may be discerned. Frye (1957, p. 250) identifies three generic trees: epos and fiction (the largest area), drama, and lyric. For example, according to Frye, it is possible to move backward from the emergence of the novel (a comparatively recent form), through the traditional tales of

the Middle Ages (fabliaux, romances, folktales), to scripture and myth, and finally to the roots of the form in epos and recited fiction.

Length. In some instances, it is useful to make a distinction, for stylistic purposes, between "short" and "long" forms within a broad generic type. For example, the short story and the novel share many characteristics and both fall under the general category of prose fiction. The strong relationship between the short story and the novel is exhibited in the testimony of writers who have sat down with the intention of writing a short story and ended up producing a novel (see Cowley, 1958), after discovering that the emerging complexities of character, plot development, or structure required the longer form. There are, however, very few pairs or sets of generic forms that allow for such shifts from one to the other. Other examples of length contrasts are the one-act play vs. the full-scale drama and the diary or journal form vs. the autobiography. Regardless of the similarities among these form pairs, the differences in length present unique problems and also opportunities for the writers in either form, and the various techniques employed for handling the contrasting genres may in part be stylistic distinctions between the paired types. An example of such stylistic differnces: in the longer works, as mentioned earlier, the writer must seek stylistic means for maintaining reader interest. At each point in the text, the necessity for textual continuity must be balanced against the necessity for freshness and variety. The writer will choose from a host of stylistic devices the means for achieving this continuity, balance, and variety: shifts of style for variety;

recurring motifs, themes, and symbols for continuity; and some complementation of and tension between the forces of variety and the forces of continuity to achieve a dynamic balance throughout the work. The writer in the shorter genres will be more concerned with stylistic means for economizing and distilling his subject matter. In the one-act play or in the short story, for example, the limited framework usually requires him to choose one narrative ingredient to emphasize (e.g., one character), and one of his major problems will be the effective subordination of other textual aspects to this one prominent feature.

Critical Concepts Related to Genre and Style

Convention and Invention. In discussing literary genres, a convention is a device, subject matter, or style that is associated with a particular genre and may in fact be one of the defining characteristics of the form. A convention may be an integral ingredient of a genre from the time the form is first developed (the number of lines in a sonnet), or it may become associated with the genre later, as the device is used repeatedly in works of the same type (the stream-of-consciousness technique in some types of modern novels). Often, especially in drama, the conventions associated with a genre are character types: the harlequin character of the commedia dell'arte, the villain of melodrama, the virtuous, fragile heroine of romantic comedy. Sometimes, the creation of a convention stems from the writer's need to represent some aspect of reality within the artificial confines of his medium. This accounts for the presence, in the drama, of "soliloquies" and "asides,"

highly artificial devices for letting the audience know what is going on in a character's mind at a particular point in the action.

Most subgenres are highly culture-specific; the conventions defining them and surrounding them fluctuate from period to period and from society to society. Sometimes, the convention is simply a vogue that endures just long enough to define a subgenre, e.g., the "comedy of humors" of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Other conventions are not prominent enough or ubiquitous enough to define a subgeneric category and are simply characteristics of a genre during a particular historical period. An example is the stylistic characteristic of nineteenth century lyric poetry identified by Frye (1957, p. 280), consisting of the fusion of an abstract noun in the possessive case with an adjective and a concrete noun ("life's best oil," "fortune's fickle moon"). Frye claims that there is an analogous preferred stylistic device in twentieth century lyric poetry, an "adjective noun of noun" pattern (an example of which would be "the massive eyelids of time").

Perhaps the most highly conventional of all generic forms is the pastoral elegy, a type of lyric poem developed by the ancient Greeks and still presumably in use, although the last notable example we have is from the Victorian period (Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis"). The true pastoral elegy contains most of the following elements, which will serve to illustrate how both the subject matter and structure of a work

can be specified to a great extent by the conventions of the generic form:

1. The speaker in the poem (presumably the poet himself) plays the role of a mourner in a funeral procession.
2. The subject of the poem, a deceased friend of the poet (and usually also a poet himself) is represented as a shepherd, as is the poet-narrator.
3. The poem begins with an invocation to the muses and references are made to other figures from classical mythology during the course of the poem.
4. All nature is described as mourning for the shepherd's death.
5. The mourner (poet) charges the mythological guardians of the dead shepherd with negligence.
6. The poet describes the procession of mourners.
7. The poet digresses during the course of the poem, relating the tragedy of his friend's death to the conditions of his time and questioning the workings of fate or divine providence.
8. Often there is an elaborate description of the flowers that are brought to deck the hearse.
9. The poem closes with a passage of consolation, in which the poet's grief and despair at his friend's death are somehow resolved, either philosophically or (in the case of Christian elegies) through the triumph of the poet's faith in eternal life.

The conventions do not prescribe the meter or rhyme scheme for the poem. However, the somber subject and tone called for by the elegaic form do require a slow-moving, preferably regular, meter, and, in two of the classic examples of the form in English (Shelley's "Adonais" and Arnold's "Thyrsis") iambic pentameter has been used throughout to evoke the stately progress of a funeral procession.

It is clear that a poem in this genre must be relatively lengthy[2] to accommodate all of the descriptive and meditative passages dictated by the conventions, and the poet will tend to use long stanzas with fairly intricate rhyme schemes[3] to provide the continuity necessitated by the length of the lyric. The vocabulary will be sober, dignified, restrained--as is appropriate for the subject matter; words of one syllable[4] and words with long syllables will be used to maintain and emphasize the slow, heavy rhythm. The poet will choose sounds whose onomatopoeic qualities connote grief.

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[2]"Lycidas": 193 lines
"Adonais": 495 lines
"Thyrsis": 240 lines

[3]Shelley's "Adonais" is written in nine-line iambic pentameter stanzas, rhymed ababbcbcc. "Thyrsis" is written in ten-line iambic pentameter stanzas; the rhyme scheme is abcbcadeed. The lines of "Lycidas" are not arranged in stanzas and they rhyme scheme is irregular (the first fourteen lines are rhymed abccbbefbefbfb).

[4]An example from "Adonais":

> Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down
> Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
> Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
> For whom should she have waked the sullen year?

Finally, by giving himself and the subject of the poem the personas of shepherds, and by displaying his own thoughts and emotions within the stylized, unrealistic framework of the ancient elegy form, the poet is able to represent intense feeling while yet maintaining a desirable "distance" from his subject matter, so that the poem's statement is capable of great eloquence and passion without becoming too cloying or tritely personal. All of these examples indicate how stylistic qualities in a work may be influenced or determined by the conventions of the genre in which the work is written.

Opposed to convention is "invention"--what is original or striking in the use of a genre by an individual writer, particularly when the invention replaces some conventional characteristic in the genre (the poetry of Donne and T.S. Eliot is often cited as being particularly inventive). Of course, each new literary work is inventive (even if it is an imitation), and faithful use of the conventions of a form does not lessen the quality of a work. The important point is that the conventions are the resources or background upon which or against which the writer builds a work reflective of his own individual voice (i.e., in his own style).

The effective use of the available conventions represents the solution to a problem, how the writer creates new patterns out of recognized materials. In producing a literary work, the artist selects, recombines, discards, innovates; he cannot work in a vacuum. Similarly, each reader (listener) of the work brings to his experience of the work his background of familiarity with or ignorance of the conventions

of the form. Genres differ in the extent to which the writer typically attempts to satisfy or violate his reader's expectations (assuming the reader is familiar with the generic form being used), and these differences are associated with the density of conventional characteristics in the genre. For example, Gothic novels and detective stories are conventional to a rather high degree and a significant part of the desired effect of works in these genres is to satisfy the reader's expectations about what will be contained in such a work. Epic poetry is more conventional than lyric poetry, partly because epic poetry lends itself to a relatively limited number of themes while most lyric subgenres can contain poems on any topic. Much more frequently than any other genre, lyric poetry depends for its effect on the fresh, the surprising image.

Decorum. The concept of decorum is also relevant in the discussion of the relationship between genre and style. "Decorum" is a critical term denoting "the propriety or fittingness with which a literary kind, its characters and actions, and the style of its narration and its dialogue are matched to each" (Abrams, 1957, p. 38). In earlier literary periods, scholars labeled and ranked, not only generic categories, but styles and types of characters--each level of style and character corresponding to an appropriate genre at a matching level. Decorum was the degree to which the levels were matched in a work according to the criteria set down by literary experts, and adherence to decorum was considered of the utmost importance in maintaining unity and harmony in a work. However, strict attention to the requirements for decorum led

eventually to a hardening of character types and a rigidity of style. Decorum was the controlling critical idea of certain literary periods, especially the neo-classic period in England (1660-1800).

Today generic categories are compound and indistinct, and there are no well-specified standards for the production of works in a given literary form. In addition, our literary heritage has provided us with numerous examples of authors who flagrantly violated standards of decorum and yet produced works or great merit. Many of the most celebrated humorous works have as a main source for their humorous effect their flouting of the principles of decorum--using a weighty verse form and dignified style with low comic content (Marlowe's Hero and Leander is one of the more outrageous examples of this), or mismatching and then juxtaposing "high" and "low" subjects and styles with seeming abandon (Byron's Don Juan). In spite of these factors, a somewhat redefined notion of decorum can still be effectively applied to literary works. Earlier, the argument was presented that the writer forms his work upon or against a background composed in part of the conventions of the genre he is employing. If the writer decides to violate or ignore the conventions of the form, or to innovate in some striking way, a tension is set up in the work. The degree to which the artist successfully manages this tension and holds the work in balance, or--if his genre choice is more conventional--the writer's success in shaping the elements into a harmonious and cohesive whole, can be considered examples of decorum. The means used by the writer to achieve these effects are aspect of his writing style.

Recent Work Related to Genre and Style

One definition of literary style is "that kind of linguistic variation that correlates with context" (Enkvist, 1973, p. 32), or, put another way, "the aggregate of the contextual probabilities of the linguistic items of a text." This definition, an exaple of the deviation-from-norm type of style definition (TN 2-74-05) has particular relevance for the present discussion since genre comprises one of the many contexts into which any given work may be placed. An ordered list of contextual features worked out by Enkvist (pp. 58-59) will give some idea of the complexity of the environment of a text:

Ordered List of Contextual Features

textual context

linguistic frame

phonetic context (voice quality, speech rate, etc.)

phonemic context

morphemic context (he sings/he singeth)

syntactic context (including sentence length and complexity)

lexical context

punctuation, capitalization

compositional frame

beginning, middle, or end of utterance, paragraph, poem, play, etc.

relationship of text to surrounding textual portions

meter, literary form, typographical arrangement

extratextual context

period

type of speech, literary genre, subject matter

speaker/writer

listener/reader

relationship between speaker/writer and listener/reader in terms of sex, age, familiarity, education, social class and status, common stock of experience, etc.

context of situation and environment

gesture, physical action

dialect and language

According to Enkvist's version of the deviation-from-norm view of style, literary genres have their own stylistic characteristics which, as suggested earlier, may be part of the set of defining attributes of the genre. The basic enterprise of the deviation-from-norm approach to style is the analysis of a text or set of texts by comparison with a norm text or set of texts (the norm being the background for the comparison). In making such comparisons, genre/style relationships are involved in several ways. The investigated text and the norm text must be contextually related (share several significant contextual features) and, since genre is one of the contexts of a work, the norm text for a comparison may be chosen because it bears a generic relationship to the text under investigation. The idea of the comparison is to isolate "style markers"--stylistic features whose density of occurrence is different in the text and in the norm. If the norm is chosen because it

belongs to the same generic category as the investigated text, the stylistic features associated with genre will not be thrown into relief by the comparison. However, if other contextual parameters are employed for selection of the norm, the generic characteristics of stylistic relevance will become style markers and should emerge in the analysis. Although comparison of texts has long been a favored mode of critical approach in the study of literature, recent comparison studies, influenced by linguistic research, have taken on a more scientifically rigorous appearance (see Enkvist et al., 1964).

Scholars currently working on the question of style, attempting to make systematic comparisons of text, have found themselves faced with the same problem complained of by Frye in the passage quoted earlier--the lack of a well-defined basis for categorizing works by genre. Indeed, the problem for these researchers is much more formidable, since not only genre, but all other identifiable contextual parameters of potential stylistic significance must be defined and their ranges somehow charted.

Spencer and Gregory (see Enkvist et al., 1964) have also emphasized the need for "placing" a text within its various contexts as a basis for stylistic analysis. They identify three contextual parameters: field, mode, and tenor of discourse, all of which have relevance to both genre and style. Their concept of the "mode" of discourse was described earlier (p. 8); it refers to linguistic differences arising from the use of speech as opposed to writing. "Field" refers to the subject matter of the

discourse; a lengthy work like a novel will contain many such fields. The parameter of "tenor" reflects the relationship between the writer/speaker and the reader/listener, chiefly in terms of a formality-in-formality continuum. In addition, the text can also be placed within an historical period and a dialectal setting.

Crystal and Davy (1969) have presented a somewhat refined approach to similar contextual variables. Their contextual system may be outlined as follows:

A. individuality
   a. dialect
   b. time

B. discourse
   a. [simple/complex] medium (speech, writing)
   b. [simple/complex] participation (monologue, dialogue)

C. province
   a. status
   b. modality
   c. singularity

In this scheme, the features under A and B are fairly self-explanatory. "Province" refers to occupational or professional activity (the law, science, etc.). "Status" is concerned with the relative social standing of the participants in the communication. Differences in the form and medium of communication are covered under "modality" (which has a strong similarity to the concept of genre). "Singularity" is related

to "individuality," but the two differ in that the former idiosyncrasies of the writer are

> typically short, temporary, and manipulable, usually being deliberately introduced into a situation to make a specific linguistic contrast, whereas the latter are relatively continuous, permanent, and not able to manipulate in this way--in short, nonlinguistic. (Crystal and Davy, p. 76)

A third example of an attempt at an inventory of context parameters is the system proposed by Vinogradov and Kostomarov (1969), consisting of five, mainly binary, categories:

--means of communication: speech, writing, gesture

--presence or absence of the communication partner

--one-way or two-way flow of communication

--individual vs. mass communication

--communication in contact or at a distance

Discounting the medium of gesture, each category may be considered binary, in which case there are $2^5=32$ possible communication situations in this scheme.

This type of work is still at a rather crude beginning stage, but it is reflective of the current trend to attack rather than ignore the problems involved in identifying and systematizing the textual environment, and to place generic considerations within a broader framework of contextual parameters. These theoretical studies are of pedagogical interest because of the necessity for the discovery or creation of new, more relevant and accurate categorizations of texts for instructional purposes, since, as we have seen, the traditional generic categories have become less and less useful as a framework for the description of texts.

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APPENDIX A

LITERARY GENRES

ABECEDARIUS
ABSTRACT POETRY
ACADEMIC TRAGEDY
ACROSTIC
ADAGE
ADONIC VERSE
ADVENTURE STORY
ALBA
ALCAICS
ALLEGORY
ALMANAC
ALPHABET VERSE
ANA
ANACREONTIC POETRY
ANALECTA
ANATHEMA
ANATOMY
ANECDOTAL ESSAY
ANECDOTE
ANIMAL EPIC
ANNALS
ANNUAL
ANTHEM
ANTHOLOGY
ANTIMASQUE
ANTI-NOVEL
ANTIPHON
APERÇU

APHORISM
APHORISTIC ESSAY
APOLOGUE
APOLOGY
APOTHEGM
APPRENTICESHIP NOVEL
ART BALLAD
ART EPIC
ART LYRIC
ARTHURIAN LEGEND
ARTICLE
ARTIFICIAL COMEDY
ATELLANA FABULA
AUBADE
AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BALLAD
BALLAD OPERA
BALLADE
BEAST EPIC
BEAST FABLE
BELLES-LETTRES
BESTIARY
BIBLE
BILDUNGSROMAN
BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY
BIOGRAPHY
BLACK COMEDY
BLURB
BON MOT
BOURGEOIS DRAMA
BOURGEOIS LITERATURE
BOURGEOIS TRAGEDY
BRETON LAY
BRIEF
BROADSIDE BALLAD
BUCOLIC POETRY
BULL
BURLESQUE
BURLETTA
BY LAWS

CABAL
CALENDAR
CANTICLE
CANZO
CANZONE
CARICATURE
CARMEN FIGURATUM
CAROL
CATCH
CAUSERIE
CAVALIER LYRIC
CENTO
CHANSON
CHANSON DE GESTE
CHANT
CHANT ROYAL
CHANTEY
CHAPBOOK
CHARACTER
CHARIVARI
CHIVALRIC ROMANCE
CHRISTMAS CAROL
CHRONICLE
CHRONICLE PLAY
CLASSICAL TRAGEDY
CLERIHEW
CLIFF-HANGER

CLOAK AND DAGGER
CLOSET DRAMA
COMEDY
COMEDY OF HUMOURS
COMEDY OF INTRIGUE
COMEDY OF MANNERS
COMEDY OF SITUATION
COMIC BOOK
COMIC OPERA
COMIC STRIP
COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE
COMMONPLACE BOOK
COMPLAINT
CONFESSION
CONSTITUTION
CONTE
CORONACH
CORPUS CHRISTI PLAY
COSTUME PIECE
COURT COMEDY
COURTESY BOOK
CRITICAL ESSAY
CROWN OF SONNETS
CRY
CUBIST POETRY
CYCLE
CYCLIC DRAMA
DÉBAT
DEFENSE
DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY
DETECTIVE STORY
DIALECTIC
DIARY
DIDACTIC ESSAY
DIDACTIC LITERATURE
DIME NOVEL
DIRECT SATIRE
DIRGE
DISCUSSION PLAY
DISSERTATION
DITHYRAMBIC VERSE
DITTY
DOGGEREL
DOMESTIC TRAGEDY
DRAMA
DRAMA OF SENSIBILITY
DRAMATIC LYRIC
DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE
DRAMATIC POETRY
DRAME
DREAM VISION
DROLL
DUMB SHOW
DUOLOGUE

ECHO VERSE
ECLOGUE
EDITORIAL
EDITORIAL ESSAY
ELEGY
EMBLEM BOOK
ENCOMIUM
ENGLISH SONNET
ENTR'ACTE
EPHEMERIDES
EPIC
EPIGRAM
EPIGRAMMATIC ESSAY
EPISTLE
EPISTOLARY NOVEL
EPITAPH
EPITHALAMION
EPITOME
EQUIVOQUE
ERZIEHUNGSROMAN
ESSAY
ETIQUETTE BOOK
EULOGY
EXEMPLUM
EXTRAVAGANZA

FABLE
FABLIAU
FAIRY TALE
FAMILIAR ESSAY
FANTASY
FARCE
FARCE-COMEDY
FICTION
FOLK BALLAD
FOLK DRAMA
FOLK EPIC
FOLKLORE
FOLK SONG
FOLKTALE
FORMAL ESSAY
FORMAL SATIRE
FRAME STORY
FREE VERSE
FRIENDLY LETTER

GENRE
GENTEEL COMEDY
GEORGIC

GEST
GIFT-BOOK
GOLIARDIC VERSE
GOTHIC NOVEL
GOTHIC ROMANCE
GRAND OPERA
GREEK COMEDY
GREEK TRAGEDY

HAGIOGRAPHY
HAIKU
HARLEQUINADE
HEROIC DRAMA
HEROIC POEM
HEROIC TRAGEDY
HIGH COMEDY
HISTORY
HISTORICAL ESSAY
HISTORICAL NOVEL
HISTORY PLAY
HOKKU
HOMILY
HORATIAN ODE
HORATIAN SATIRE
HORNBOOK
HUDIBRASTIC POEM
HUMANITARIAN NOVEL
HUMOROUS ESSAY
HYMN

IDYL
INDIRECT SATIRE
INFORMAL ESSAY
INTERLUDE
IRREGULAR ODE
ITALIAN SONNET

JEREMIAD
JEST-BOOK
JINGLE
JOURNAL
JUVENALIAN SATIRE

KABUKI
KÜNSTLERROMAN

LAI
LAMENT
LAMPOON
LAY
LEGEND
LETTER
LIGHT OPERA
LIGHT VERSE
LIMERICK
LITERARY BALLAD
LITERARY EPIC
LITURGICAL DRAMA
LOCAL COLOR WRITING
LOVE-LAY
LOW COMEDY
LULLABY
LYRIC
LYRICAL DRAMA

MACARONIC VERSE
MADRIGAL
MANIFESTO
MÄRCHEN
MASKED COMEDY
MASQUE
MATIN
MAXIM
MEDIEVAL DRAMA
MEDIEVAL ROMANCE
MELODRAMA
MEMOIR
MENIPPEAN SATIRE
METRICAL ROMANCE
MIME
MIRACLE PLAY
MOCK EPIC
MOCK HEROIC POEM
MONODY
MONOLOGUE
MORALITY PLAY
MUMMERY
MUSICAL COMEDY
MYSTERY NOVEL
MYSTERY PLAY
MYSTERY STORY
MYTH

NARRATIVE ESSAY
NARRATIVE POEM
NATURE ESSAY
NEW NOVEL
NOCTURNE
NOH
NONSENSE VERSE

NOVEL
NOVEL OF CHARACTER
NOVEL OF INCIDENT
NOVEL OF MANNERS
NOVEL OF SENSIBILITY
NOVEL OF THE SOIL
NOVELETTE
NOVELLA

OCCASIONAL POEM
ODE
ONE-ACT PLAY
OPERA
OPERA BOUFFE
OPERETTA
ORATION

PAEAN
PAGEANT
PALINODE
PANEGYRIC
PANTOMIME
PARABLE
PARODY
PASTICHE
PASTORAL
PASTORAL DRAMA
PASTORAL ELEGY
PASTORAL ROMANCE
PASTOURELLE
PATTER SONG
PERIODICAL ESSAY
PERSONAL ESSAY
PETRARCHAN SONNET
PHILLIPPIC
PICARESQUE NARRATIVE
PICARESQUE NOVEL
PINDARIC ODE
PLAIN SONG
PLAINT
PLAY
POEM
POETIC DRAMA
POETRY
POPULAR BALLAD
POTBOILER
PRIMARY EPIC
PROBLEM NOVEL
PROBLEM PLAY
PROGNOSTICATIONS
PROPAGANDA NOVEL
PROPAGANDIST LITERATURE
PROSE
PROSE POETRY
PROSE ROMANCE
PROVERB
PSALM
PSYCHOLOGICAL ESSAY
PSYCHOLOGICAL NOVEL
PUN
PURE POETRY

REALISTIC COMEDY
REALISTIC NOVEL
RECANTATION
REFLECTIVE ESSAY
REGIONAL NOVEL
REGULAR ODE
RELIGIOUS DRAMA
REQUIEM
RESTORATION COMEDY
RESUMÉ
REVENGE TRAGEDY
REVIEW
REVUE
ROMAN À CLEF
ROMAN À THÈSE
ROMAN-FLEUVE
ROMANCE
ROMANTIC COMEDY
ROMANTIC EPIC
ROMANTIC NOVEL
ROMANTIC TRAGEDY
RONDEAU
RONDEL
ROUND
ROUNDEL
ROUNDELAY
RUNE
RUSTIC DIALOGUE

SAGA
SAINT'S PLAY
SATIRE
SATIRIC COMEDY
SATYR PLAY
SCENARIO
SCIENCE FICTION
SCRIPTURE
SEA CHANTEY

SENECAN TRAGEDY
SENTIMENTAL COMEDY
SENTIMENTAL NOVEL
SERENADE
SERMON
SESTINA
SHAKESPEAREAN SONNET
SHORT SHORT STORY
SHORT STORY
SHIVAREE
SINGING MATCH
SKELETONIC
SKELTONIC VERSE
SKETCH
SLAPSTICK
SOCIOLOGICAL NOVEL
SONG
SONNET
SONNET SEQUENCE
SPENSERIAN SONNET
STORY OF CHARACTER
STORY OF INCIDENT
STORY-WITHIN-A-STORY
STREAM-OF-CONSCIOUSNESS NOVEL

TAIL-RHYME ROMANCE
TALE
TALL TALE
TANKA
TELESTICH
TESTAMENT
THEATER OF THE ABSURB
THESIS
THRENODY
TOPICAL ESSAY
TRACT
TRADITIONAL BALLAD
TRADITIONAL EPIC
TRAGEDY
TRAGEDY OF BLOOD
TRAGICOMEDY
TRAVESTY
TRILOGY
TRIOLET
TROPE
TUMBLING VERSE

UTOPIA

VARRONIAN SATIRE
VAUDEVILLE
VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ
VERS LIBRE
VERSE
VILLANELLE

WESTERN NOVEL
WESTERN STORY

APPENDIX B

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
ABECEDARIUS	A composition in verse in which the stanzas or lines begin with the letters of the alphabet in regular order.	Shaw, 1.	See also ACROSTIC
ACADEMIC TRAGEDY	One of the two main lines of development of Senecan drama in the Elizabethan age. The academic tragedies were written in close imitation of the Senecan models, including the use of a chorus, and usually constructed according to the rules of the three unities which had been elaborated by Italian critics of the age.	Abrams, 174.	See also TRAGEDY, SENECAN TRAGEDY, REVENGE TRAGEDY
ACROSTIC	Usually verse, though sometimes a piece of prose composition, arranged in such a way as to present names or phrases or sentences when certain letters selected according to an orderly sequence are brought together.	THH, 3.	
ADAGE	A proverb or wise saying made familiar by long use. Example: "No bees, no honey."	THH, 4.	Synonym: MAXIM See also PROVERB
ADONIC VERSE	A verse form associated with Greek and Latin prosody and denoting that meter which consists of a dactyl and a spondee as ‒ ⏑ ⏑ / ‒ ‒ or trochee, as ‒ ⏑ ⏑ / ‒ ⏑ probably so called after the Adonia, the festival of Adonis.	THH, 7.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
ADVENTURE STORY	Usually applied to literary material in which the reader's primary attention is focused on "what happens next?" To the exclusion of such questions as "why?" and "how?" Includes science fiction, westerns, mystery stories.	Shaw, 8.	See also SCIENCE FICTION, WESTERN NOVEL, MYSTERY STORY
ALBA	A Provençal lament over the parting of lovers at the break of day, the name coming from the Provençal word for "dawn," with which the refrain ends.	THH, 7.	
ALCAICS	Verses written according to the manner of the odes of Alcaeus, usually a four-stanza poem, each stanza composed of four lines, each line having four stresses.	THH, 7.	
ALLEGORY	A narrative in which the agents and action, and sometimes the setting as well, are contrived not only to make sense in themselves, but also to signify a second, correlated order of persons, things, concepts, or events. There are two main types: (1) historical and political (2) allegory of ideas.	Abrams, 4.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
ALMANAC	In medieval times, a permanent table showing the movements of the heavenly bodies, from which calculations for any year could be made. Later, almanacs or calendars for short spans of years and, finally, for single years were prepared. A further step in the evolution of the form came with the inclusion of useful information, especially for farmers. This use of the almanac as a storehouse of general information led ultimately to such modern works as the World Almanac, a compendium of historical and statistical data not limited to the single year.	THH, 9-10.	Synonyms: PROGNOSTICATIONS, CALENDAR, EPHEMERIDES	
ALPHABET BOOK				
ANA	Miscellaneous sayings, anecdotes, gossip, and scraps of information about a particular person, place or event; or a book which records such sayings and anecdotes.	THH, 15.	See also ANECDOTE, CHARACTER	
ANACREONTIC POETRY	Verse in the mood and manner of the lyrics of the Greek poet Anacreon; that is, poems characterized by an erotic, amatory, or Bacchanalian spirit. The characteristic Anacreontic stanza consists of four lines rhyming abab, each line composed of three trochaic feet with one long syllable added at the end of the line: — ⏑ / — ⏑ / — ⏑ / —	THH, 16.		

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
ANALECTS	Literary gleans, fragments, or selected passages from the writings of an author or different authors; also the title for a collection of choice extracts, e.g., Analects from Confucius.	THH, 17.		
ANATHEMA	A formal and solemn denunciation or imprecation, particularly as pronounced by the Greek or Roman Catholic Church against an individual, an institution, or a doctrine.	THH, 18.		
ANATOMY	(Named after Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, 1621) a mixed or encyclopedic form that satirizes various kinds of intellectual types and attitudes, usually by means of long comic dialogues.	Abrams, 60.	Synonym: MENIPPEAN SATIRE	
ANECDOTE	A short narrative detailing particulars of an interesting episode or event. In careful usage the term most frequently refers to a narrated incident in the life of an important person and should lay claim to an element of truth. Often used by writers as the basis for short stories.	THH, 20-21.	See also SHORT STORY, SKETCH	
ANGLO-SAXON POETRY			See OLD ENGLISH POETRY	
ANIMAL EPIC			See BEAST EPIC	
ANIMAL STORY				

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
ANNALS	Narratives of historical events recorded year by year.	THH, 24.		
ANNUALS	Books appearing in successive numbers at intervals of one year and usually reviewing the events of the year within specified fields of interest, as college annuals. The term is sometimes applied also to such compendiums as the World Almanac, embracing historical data and miscellaneous statistics covering a long range of years.	THH, 25.		
ANTHEM	In its popular use refers to any song of praise, rejoicing, or reverence.	THH, 26.		
ANTHOLOGY	Literally "a gathering of flowers," the term is used to designate a collection of writing, either poetry or prose, usually by various authors.	THH, 26.		
ANTI-MASQUE	A grotesque, usually humorous dance interspersed among the beautiful and serious actions and dances of a masque. It was often performed by professional actors and dancers and served as a foil to the masque proper, performed by courtly amateurs.	THH, 27.	See also MASQUE	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
ANTI-NOVEL	A work which is deliberately constructed in a negative fashion, relying for its effects on omitting or annihilating traditional elements of the novel, and on playing against the expectations established in the reader by the novelistic methods and conventions of the past.	Abrams, 114.	
ANTIPHON	A verse or song rendered responsively (in separate parts). The term is usually applied to church music.	Shaw, 25.	See also SONG, ANTHEM, CHANT
APHORISM	A concise statement of a principle or precept given in pointed words. Later applied to statements of general principle briefly given in a variety of practical fields, such as law, politics, and art. Aphorism implies specific authorship and compact, telling expression.	THH, 29.	See also APOTHEGM, RUNE
APOLOGUE	A fictitious narrative about animals or inanimate objects, which, by acting like human beings, reflect the weaknesses and follies of mankind. A short allegory designed to teach a moral lesson. A fable.		Synonyms: ALLEGORY, BEAST FABLE

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
APOLOGY	(1) The term often appears in literature, especially in literary titles, in its older sense of "defense"... (2) Also an old spelling for apologue, a fable.	THH, 30.	
APOTHEGM	A sharply pointed and often startling maxim, more particularly centered and practical than an aphorism, although like it in other respects.	THH, 31.	Synonym: MAXIM See also APHORISM
APPRENTICESHIP NOVEL	A novel which recounts the youth and young manhood of a sensitive protagonist who is attempting to learn the nature of the world, discover its meaning and pattern, and acquire a philosophy of life and "the art of living."	THH, 31.	Synonym: BILDUNGSROMAN
ART BALLAD	A term occasionally used to distinguish the modern or literary ballad of known authorship from the early ballads of unknown authorship.	THH, 34.	Synonym: LITERARY BALLAD
ART EPIC			See LITERARY EPIC
ART LYRIC	A lyric characterized by a minuteness of subject, great delicacy of touch, careful perfection in phrasing, artificiality of sentiment, and formality.... Differs from the ordinary lyric in the degree to which the poet's self-conscious struggle for perfection of form	THH, 34-35.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
	dominates the spontaneity of this emotion. Examples: the French forms <u>troilet</u>, <u>ballade</u>, <u>rondeau</u>, <u>rondel</u>.			
ARTHURIAN LEGEND	One of the great themes of <u>medieval romance</u>. A legend recounting portions of the life and exploits of King Arthur.	THH, 35-36.	See also MEDIEVAL ROMANCE, CHRONICLE, LEGEND	
ARTICLE	A type of essay that is impersonal and largely factual. In an article the author writes as an authority on a subject and presents his argument and information in a systematic fashion. The term is applied to informative pieces for such widely varying places of publication as newspapers, magazines, learned and scholarly journals, and encyclopedias.	THH, 34.	See also ESSAY	
ARTIFICIAL COMEDY	A term sometimes used (as by Lamb) for comedy reflecting an artificial society, like the comedy of manners.	THH, 37.	See also COMEDY OF MANNERS	
ATELLANA FABULA	Ancient Roman farce.	Shaw, 36.		
AUBADE	A lyric about dawn or a morning serenade. Differs from the Provencal alba in usually being joyous, whereas the alba is a lament.	THH, 39.	See also ALBA	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
AUTOBIOGRAPHY	The story of a person's life written by himself.	THH, 39.	See also MEMOIRS, DIARY, JOURNAL, LETTER
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL	a somewhat fictionalized account of a person's own life.		See also AUTOBIOGRAPHY, NOVEL
BALLAD	A form of verse adapted for singing or recitation and primarily characterized by its presentation in simple narrative form of a dramatic or exciting episode.	THH, 42.	
BALLAD OPERA	A name given to a sort of burlesque opera. Modeled on Italian opera, which it burlesqued, it told its story in songs set to old tunes and appropriated various elements from farce and comedy.	THH, 43.	See also OPERA, COMIC OPERA
BALLADE	One of the most popular of the artificial French verse forms. Typical characteristics: (1) The refrain, carrying the motif of the poem and recurring regularly at the end of each stanza and of the envoy. (2) The envoy, a peroration of climactic importance and likely to be addressed to a high member of the court or to the poet's patron.	THH, 43-44.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
BALLADE (cont'd.)	(3) The use of only 3 (or 4) rhymes in the entire poem, occurring at the same position in each stanza and with no rhyme-word repeated except in the refrain.		
BEAST EPIC	A favorite medieval literary form consisting of a series of linked stories grouped about animal characters and often presenting satirical comment on contemporary life of church or court by means of human qualities attributed to beast characters.	THH, 46.	Synonym: ANIMAL EPIC
BEAST FABLE	A short tale in which the principal actors are animals.	THH, 47.	Synonym: APOLOGUE See also FABLE
BEAST STORY			
BELLES-LETTRES	Literature, more especially that body of writing comprising drama, poetry, fiction, criticism, and essays which lives because of inherent imaginative and artistic rather than scientific or intellectual qualities.	THH, 48.	
BESTIARY	A type of literature, particularly popular during the medieval centuries, in which the habits of beasts, birds, and reptiles were made the text for allegorical and mystical Christian teaching. Often ascribed human attributes to animals and were	THH, 48.	See also ALLEGORY, BEAST FABLE, PARABLE

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
	designed to moralize and to expound church doctrine.			
BIBLE	(1) The Bible is a collection or library of books containing history, poetry, biography, stories, letters, and divine revelations. (2) The word "bible" may be used to refer to the sacred book(s) of any religion.	Shaw, 49.	See also SCRIPTURE	
BILDUNGSROMAN	"Novels of formation." The subject of these and the Erziehungsroman is the development of the protagonist's mind and character, as he passes from childhood through varied experiences--into maturity and the recognition of his identity and role in the world.	Abrams, 112.	Synonym: ERZIEHUNGSROMAN, APPRENTICESHIP NOVEL See also KÜNSTLERROMAN	
BIOGRAPHY	A relatively full account of the facts of a man's life, involving the attempt to set forth his character, temperament, and milieu as well as his experiences and activities.	Abrams, 15.	See also AUTOBIOGRAPHY, HAGIOGRAPHY	
BLACK COMEDY	The so-called humor of the absurd, perverted, and morbid. Since World War II, black comedy and black humor have developed into a literary genre. Black comedy (humor) is sometimes called "sick" because of its generally alien attitude toward contemporary society.	Shaw, 52.	See also COMEDY	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
BLURB	A term applied in the American book trade to the descriptive matter printed on the jackets of new books, usually extravagant in its claims.	THH, 61.		
BON MOT	A witty repartee or statement. A clever saying.	THH, 62.		
BOURGEOIS DRAMA	A loose term applied to plays in which the life of the common folk rather than that of the courtly or the rich is depicted.	THH, 63.		
BOURGEOIS LITERATURE	Literature produced primarily to appeal to the middle class reader.	THH, 63.		
BOURGEOIS TRAGEDY	A popular eighteenth century dramatic form which was written in prose and presented a protagonist from the common ranks who suffers a commonplace or domestic disaster.	Abrams, 175.	Synonym: DOMESTIC TRAGEDY	
BRETON LAY	The earliest existing French lais which were composed in the twelfth century and were professedly based upon earlier songs or verse-tales sung by Breton minstrels on themes drawn from Celtic legend.	THH, 255.	See also LAY (LAI)	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
BRIEF	A condensed statement, a résumé, of the main arguments or ideas presented in a speech or piece of writing. In legal practice, a formal summary of laws and authorities bearing on the main points of a case; in church history, a papal letter less formal than a bull.	THH, 64.		
BROADSIDE BALLAD	Ballads prepared for circulation on folio sheets, printed on one side only, two pages to the sheet, and two columns to the page. Popular in sixteenth century England, these ballads were often satirical in nature and frequently personal in their invective.	THH, 65.		
BUCOLIC POETRY			See PASTORAL POETRY	
BURLESQUE	Often defined as "an incongruous imitation"; that is, it imitates the matter or manner of a serious literary work, or literary genre, but makes the imitation amusing by a ridiculous disparity between its form and its style and its subject matter. The burlesque may be written for the sheer fun of it; usually, however, it is a form of satire.	Abrams, 17.	See also PARODY, TRAVESTY, SATIRE	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
BURLETTA	A term used in the late eighteenth century for a variety of musical dramatic forms containing rhymed lyrics and resembling comic opera.	THH, 67.	See also DRAMA, BALLAD OPERA, EXTRAVAGANZA, PANTOMIME
CABAL			See ACROSTIC
CALENDAR			See ALMANAC
CANTICLE	One of the usually non-metrical hymns or chants, chiefly from the Bible, sung in church services.	Shaw, 63.	See also HYMN, CHANT, BIBLE, ANTIPHON
CANZO	A love song of the trouvéres (a group or school of poets who wrote in Northern France in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries).	THH, 70.	See also SONG
CANZONE	A lyrical poem, a song or ballad. In several ways the canzone is similar to the madrigal. The canzone is a short poem consisting of equal stanzas and an envoy of fewer lines than the stanza. Not unlike the chant royal though its conventions are less fixed.	THH, 71.	See also LYRIC, SONG, BALLAD, MADRIGAL, CHANT ROYAL

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
CARICATURE	Descriptive writing which seizes upon certain individual qualities of a person and through exaggeration or distortion produces a burlesque, ridiculous effect. Caricature, unlike the highest satire, is likely to treat personal qualities, though, like satire, it lends itself to the ridicule of political, religious, and social foibles.	THH, 71.	See also SATIRE, BURLESQUE, PARODY, TRAVESTY
CARMEN FIGURATUM	A poem so written that the form of the printed words suggests the subject matter; the device is not common in English poetry, and is usually considered a form of false "wit."	THH, 71.	See also EMBLEM
CAROL (CAROLE)	In medieval times in France a carole was a dance, the term later being applied to the song which accompanied the dance. Later, carol was used to mean any joyous song, then a hymn of religious joy, and finally was used to designate Christmas hymns in particular.	THH, 72-73.	See also SONG, HYMN, ANTHEM
CATCH	A musical round in which the words are so arranged as to produce humorous effects.	Shaw, 66.	See also SONG, ROUND

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CENTO	A literary patchwork, usually in verse, made up of scraps from one or many authors.	THH, 77.	See also ANTHOLOGY
CHANSON	A song. Originally composed of two-line stanzas of equal length (couplets), each stanza ending in a refrain, the chanson is now more broadly interpreted to include almost any poem intended to be sung, and written in a simple style.	THH, 77.	See also SONG, CHANSON DE GESTE
CHANSON DE GESTE	A "song of great deeds." A term applied to the early French epic.	THH, 77.	See also CHANSON, EPIC
CHANT	Loosely used to mean a song, but more particularly the term signifies the intoning of words to a monotonous musical measure of few notes.	THH, 77-78.	See also SONG

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CHANT ROYAL	One of the more complex, and therefore less used, French verse forms. The tradition of this verse form demands a dignified, heroic subject such as can best be expressed in rich diction and courtly formalities of speech. The chant royal consists of sixty lines arranged in five stanzas of eleven verses each and an envoy of five verses, the envoy ordinarily starting with an invocation in the manner of the ballade.	THH, 78.		
CHANTEY (SHANTY)	A sailor's song marked by strong rhythm and, in the good old days of sail, used to accompany certain forms of hard labor performed by seamen working in a group.	THH, 78.	See also SONG Synonym: SEA CHANTEY	
CHAPBOOK	Literally "cheap" book; a small book or pamphlet, usually a single signature of sixteen or thirty-two pages, poorly printed and crudely illustrated, which was sold to the common people in England and America through the eighteenth century by peddlers or "chapmen." Dealt with a hodgepodge of topics and incidents.	THH, 78.		

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CHARACTER	A literary form which flourished in England and France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is a brief descriptive sketch of a personage who typifies some definite quality. Later, characters became more individualized and were combined with the essay, as in the periodical essays of Addison and Steele.	THH, 79.	See also ESSAY
CHARIVARI (Shivaree)	A mock serenade with pans, horns, kettles, and other noisemakers provided for a newly married couple.	Shaw, 72.	See also SONG, SERENADE
CHIVALRIC ROMANCE	A medieval romance reflecting the customs and ideals of chivalry.	THH, 82.	See also ROMANCE, MEDIEVAL ROMANCE, ARTHURIAN LEGEND
CHRISTMAS CAROL			See CAROL, FOLK SONG
CHRONICLE	The predecessors of modern "histories." Accounts, in prose or verse, of national or worldwide events over a considerable period of time. If the chronicles deal with events year by year, they are often called annals. Unlike the modern historian, most chroniclers tended to take their information as they found it, and made little attempt to separate fact from legend.	Abrams, 24.	See also ANNALS

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CLERIHEW	A form of light verse which in two couplets of irregular meter touches on a well-known person whose name forms one of the rhymes.	THH, 90.	See also LIGHT VERSE
CLIFF-HANGER	A melodramatic adventure serial (in films or magazines) in which each installment ends in suspense.	Shaw, 79.	See also MELODRAMA
CLOAK AND DAGGER	A play or novel that deals with espionage or intrigue and is highly dramatic and romantic.	Shaw, 79.	See also ROMANTIC NOVEL
CLOSET DRAMA	A work written in the form of a drama, but intended to be read rather than to be performed in the theater.	Abrams, 43.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
ABECEDARIUS	A composition in verse in which the stanzas or lines begin with the letters of the alphabet in regular order.	Shaw, 1.	See also ACROSTIC
ACADEMIC TRAGEDY	One of the two main lines of development of Senecan drama in the Elizabethan age. The academic tragedies were written in close imitation of the Senecan models, including the use of a chorus, and usually constructed according to the rules of the three unities which had been elaborated by Italian critics of the age.	Abrams, 174.	See also TRAGEDY, SENECAN TRAGEDY, REVENGE TRAGEDY
ACROSTIC	Usually verse, though sometimes a piece of prose composition, arranged in such a way as to present names or phrases or sentences when certain letters selected according to an orderly sequence are brought together.	THH, 3.	
ADAGE	A proverb or wise saying made familiar by long use. Example: "No bees, no honey."	THH, 4.	Synonym: MAXIM See also PROVERB
ADONIC VERSE	A verse form associated with Greek and Latin prosody and denoting that meter which consists of a dactyl and a spondee as ‒ ⏑⏑/‒ ‒ or trochee, as ‒ ⏑⏑ / ‒ ⏑ probably so called after the Adonia, the festival of Adonis.	THH, 7.	

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ADVENTURE STORY	Usually applied to literary material in which the reader's primary attention is focused on "what happens next?" To the exclusion of such questions as "why?" and "how?" Includes science fiction, westerns, mystery stories.	Shaw, 8.	See also SCIENCE FICTION, WESTERN NOVEL, MYSTERY STORY	
ALBA	A Provençal lament over the parting of lovers at the break of day, the name coming from the Provençal word for "dawn," with which the refrain ends.	THH, 7.		
ALCAICS	Verses written according to the manner of the odes of Alcaeus, usually a four-stanza poem, each stanza composed of four lines, each line having four stresses.	THH, 7.		
ALLEGORY	A narrative in which the agents and action, and sometimes the setting as well, are contrived not only to make sense in themselves, but also to signify a second, correlated order of persons, things, concepts, or events. There are two main types: (1) historical and political (2) allegory of ideas.	Abrams, 4.		

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ALMANAC	In medieval times, a permanent table showing the movements of the heavenly bodies, from which calculations for any year could be made. Later, almanacs or calendars for short spans of years and, finally, for single years were prepared. A further step in the evolution of the form came with the inclusion of useful information, especially for farmers. This use of the almanac as a storehouse of general information led ultimately to such modern works as the World Almanac, a compendium of historical and statistical data not limited to the single year.	THH, 9-10.	Synonyms: PROGNOSTICATIONS, CALENDAR, EPHEMERIDES
ALPHABET BOOK			
ANA	Miscellaneous sayings, anecdotes, gossip, and scraps of information about a particular person, place or event; or a book which records such sayings and anecdotes.	THH, 15.	See also ANECDOTE, CHARACTER
ANACREONTIC POETRY	Verse in the mood and manner of the lyrics of the Greek poet Anacreon; that is, poems characterized by an erotic, amatory, or Bacchanalian spirit. The characteristic Anacreontic stanza consists of four lines rhyming abab, each line composed of three trochaic feet with one long syllable added at the end of the line: — ⏑ | — ⏑ | — ⏑ | —	THH, 16.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
ANALECTS	Literary gleans, fragments, or selected passages from the writings of an author or different authors; also the title for a collection of choice extracts, e.g., Analects from Confucius.	THH, 17.		
ANATHEMA	A formal and solemn denunciation or imprecation, particularly as pronounced by the Greek or Roman Catholic Church against an individual, an institution, or a doctrine.	THH, 18.		
ANATOMY	(Named after Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, 1621) a mixed or encyclopedic form that satirizes various kinds of intellectual types and attitudes, usually by means of long comic dialogues.	Abrams, 60.	Synonym: MENIPPEAN SATIRE	
ANECDOTE	A short narrative detailing particulars of an interesting episode or event. In careful usage the term most frequently refers to a narrated incident in the life of an important person and should lay claim to an element of truth. Often used by writers as the basis for short stories.	THH, 20-21.	See also SHORT STORY, SKETCH	
ANGLO-SAXON POETRY			See OLD ENGLISH POETRY	
ANIMAL EPIC			See BEAST EPIC	
ANIMAL STORY				

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
ANNALS	Narratives of historical events recorded year by year.	THH, 24.		
ANNUALS	Books appearing in successive numbers at intervals of one year and usually reviewing the events of the year within specified fields of interest, as college annuals. The term is sometimes applied also to such compendiums as the World Almanac, embracing historical data and miscellaneous statistics covering a long range of years.	THH, 25.		
ANTHEM	In its popular use refers to any song of praise, rejoicing, or reverence.	THH, 26.		
ANTHOLOGY	Literally "a gathering of flowers," the term is used to designate a collection of writing, either poetry or prose, usually by various authors.	THH, 26.		
ANTI-MASQUE	A grotesque, usually humorous dance interspersed among the beautiful and serious actions and dances of a masque. It was often performed by professional actors and dancers and served as a foil to the masque proper, performed by courtly amateurs.	THH, 27.	See also MASQUE	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
ANTI-NOVEL	A work which is deliberately constructed in a negative fashion, relying for its effects on omitting or annihilating traditional elements of the novel, and on playing against the expectations established in the reader by the novelistic methods and conventions of the past.	Abrams, 114.		
ANTIPHON	A verse or song rendered responsively (in separate parts). The term is usually applied to church music.	Shaw, 25.	See also SONG, ANTHEM, CHANT	
APHORISM	A concise statement of a principle or precept given in pointed words. Later applied to statements of general principle briefly given in a variety of practical fields, such as law, politics, and art. Aphorism implies specific authorship and compact, telling expression.	THH, 29.	See also APOTHEGM, RUNE	
APOLOGUE	A fictitious narrative about animals or inanimate objects, which, by acting like human beings, reflect the weaknesses and follies of mankind. A short allegory designed to teach a moral lesson. A fable.		Synonyms: ALLEGORY, BEAST FABLE	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
APOLOGY	(1) The term often appears in literature, especially in literary titles, in its older sense of "defense"... (2) Also an old spelling for apologue, a fable.	THH, 30.	
APOTHEGM	A sharply pointed and often startling maxim, more particularly centered and practical than an aphorism, although like it in other respects.	THH, 31.	Synonym: MAXIM See also APHORISM
APPRENTICESHIP NOVEL	A novel which recounts the youth and young manhood of a sensitive protagonist who is attempting to learn the nature of the world, discover its meaning and pattern, and acquire a philosophy of life and "the art of living."	THH, 31.	Synonym: BILDUNGSROMAN
ART BALLAD	A term occasionally used to distinguish the modern or literary ballad of known authorship from the early ballads of unknown authorship.	THH, 34.	Synonym: LITERARY BALLAD
ART EPIC			See LITERARY EPIC
ART LYRIC	A lyric characterized by a minuteness of subject, great delicacy of touch, careful perfection in phrasing, artificiality of sentiment, and formality.... Differs from the ordinary lyric in the degree to which the poet's self-conscious struggle for perfection of form	THH, 34-35.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
	dominates the spontaneity of this emotion. Examples: the French forms troilet, ballade, rondeau, rondel.		
ARTHURIAN LEGEND	One of the great themes of medieval romance. A legend recounting portions of the life and exploits of King Arthur.	THH, 35-36.	See also MEDIEVAL ROMANCE, CHRONICLE, LEGEND
ARTICLE	A type of essay that is impersonal and largely factual. In an article the author writes as an authority on a subject and presents his argument and information in a systematic fashion. The term is applied to informative pieces for such widely varying places of publication as newspapers, magazines, learned and scholarly journals, and encyclopedias.	THH, 34.	See also ESSAY
ARTIFICIAL COMEDY	A term sometimes used (as by Lamb) for comedy reflecting an artificial society, like the comedy of manners.	THH, 37.	See also COMEDY OF MANNERS
ATELLANA FABULA	Ancient Roman farce.	Shaw, 36.	
AUBADE	A lyric about dawn or a morning serenade. Differs from the Provencal alba in usually being joyous, whereas the alba is a lament.	THH, 39.	See also ALBA

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY	The story of a person's life written by himself.	THH, 39.	See also MEMOIRS, DIARY, JOURNAL, LETTER
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL	a somewhat fictionalized account of a person's own life.		See also AUTOBI-OGRAPHY, NOVEL
BALLAD	A form of verse adapted for singing or recitation and primarily characterized by its presentation in simple narrative form of a dramatic or exciting episode.	THH, 42.	
BALLAD OPERA	A name given to a sort of burlesque opera. Modeled on Italian opera, which it burlesqued, it told its story in songs set to old tunes and appropriated various elements from farce and comedy.	THH, 43.	See also OPERA, COMIC OPERA
BALLADE	One of the most popular of the artificial French verse forms. Typical characteristics: (1) The refrain, carrying the motif of the poem and recurring regularly at the end of each stanza and of the envoy. (2) The envoy, a peroration of climactic importance and likely to be addressed to a high member of the court or to the poet's patron.	THH, 43-44.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
BALLADE (cont'd.)	(3) The use of only 3 (or 4) rhymes in the entire poem, occurring at the same position in each stanza and with no rhyme-word repeated except in the refrain.		
BEAST EPIC	A favorite medieval literary form consisting of a series of linked stories grouped about animal characters and often presenting satirical comment on contemporary life of church or court by means of human qualities attributed to beast characters.	THH, 46.	Synonym: ANIMAL EPIC
BEAST FABLE	A short tale in which the principal actors are animals.	THH, 47.	Synonym: APOLOGUE See also FABLE
BEAST STORY			
BELLES-LETTRES	Literature, more especially that body of writing comprising drama, poetry, fiction, criticism, and essays which lives because of inherent imaginative and artistic rather than scientific or intellectual qualities.	THH, 48.	
BESTIARY	A type of literature, particularly popular during the medieval centuries, in which the habits of beasts, birds, and reptiles were made the text for allegorical and mystical Christian teaching. Often ascribed human attributes to animals and were	THH, 48.	See also ALLEGORY, BEAST FABLE, PARABLE

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
	designed to moralize and to expound church doctrine.			
BIBLE	(1) The Bible is a collection or library of books containing history, poetry, biography, stories, letters, and divine revelations. (2) The word "bible" may be used to refer to the sacred book(s) of any religion.	Shaw, 49.	See also SCRIPTURE	
BILDUNGSROMAN	"Novels of formation." The subject of these and the Erziehungsroman is the development of the protagonist's mind and character, as he passes from childhood through varied experiences--into maturity and the recognition of his identity and role in the world.	Abrams, 112.	Synonym: ERZIEHUNGSROMAN, APPRENTICESHIP NOVEL See also KÜNSTLERROMAN	
BIOGRAPHY	A relatively full account of the facts of a man's life, involving the attempt to set forth his character, temperament, and milieu as well as his experiences and activities.	Abrams, 15.	See also AUTOBIOGRAPHY, HAGIOGRAPHY	
BLACK COMEDY	The so-called humor of the absurd, perverted, and morbid. Since World War II, black comedy and black humor have developed into a literary genre. Black comedy (humor) is sometimes called "sick" because of its generally alien attitude toward contemporary society.	Shaw, 52.	See also COMEDY	

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BLURB	A term applied in the American book trade to the descriptive matter printed on the jackets of new books, usually extravagant in its claims.	THH, 61.		
BON MOT	A witty repartee or statement. A clever saying.	THH, 62.		
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BOURGEOIS LITERATURE	Literature produced primarily to appeal to the middle class reader.	THH, 63.		
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CLOSET DRAMA	A work written in the form of a drama, but intended to be read rather than to be performed in the theater.	Abrams, 43.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
COMEDY	A work in which the materials are selected and managed primarily in order to interest and amuse us: the characters and their discomfitures engage our delighted attention rather than our profound concern, we feel confident that no great disaster will occur, and usually the action turns out happily for the chief characters. The term is customarily applied only to dramas; it should be noted, however, that the comic form, so defined, also occurs in prose fiction and narrative poetry.	Abrams, 25.	See also DRAMA, COMEDY OF HUMORS, COMEDY OF MANNERS, HIGH COMEDY, LOW COMEDY, COMEDY OF INTRIGUE, ARTIFICAL COMEDY MUSICAL COMEDY	
COMEDY OF HUMORS	A type of comedy which Ben Jonson, the Elizabethan playwright, based on the ancient but still current physiological theory of the four humors. In Jonson's comedy of humors, each of the major characters, instead of being a well-balanced individual, has a preponderant humor that gives him a characteristic distortion or eccentricity of disposition.	Abrams, 28.	See also COMEDY	
COMEDY OF INTRIGUE	A comedy in which the manipulation of the action by one or more characters to their own ends is of more importance than are the characters themselves.	THH, 98.	Synonym: COMEDY OF SITUATION	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
COMEDY OF MANNERS	A dramatic form dealing with the relations and intrigues of gentlemen and ladies living in a polished and sophisticated society, and relying for comic effect in great part on the wit and sparkle of the dialogue--often in the form of repartee.	Abrams, 26.	See also HIGH COMEDY, ARTIFICIAL COMEDY	
COMEDY OF SITUATION			See COMEDY OF INTRIGUE	
COMIC OPERA	An operetta, or comedy opera, stressing spectacle and music but employing spoken dialogue.	THH, 100.	Synonym: OPERETTA See also BALLAD OPERA, OPÉRA BOUFFE	
COMIC BOOK			See COMIC STRIP	
COMIC STRIP	A sequence of drawings usually printed in a horizontal strip (series of panels) in a newspaper or in a longer sequence of blocks in a Sunday newspaper supplement or so-called comic book. The drawings relate a comic incident or an adventure or mystery story. The dialogue often appears in balloons (words enclosed in lines represented as coming from the mouth of the speaker).	Shaw, 86.		
COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE	A form of comic drama developed about the mid-sixteenth century by guilds of professional Italian actors. The actors, playing stock characters, largely improvised the dialogue around a given scenario.	Abrams, 28.	See also COMEDY, SCENARIO	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
COMMONPLACE BOOK	A classified collection of quotations or arguments prepared for reference purposes.	THH, 101.	See also ANALECTA, ANTHOLOGY	
COMPLAINT	A lyric poem, frequent in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, in which the poet (1) laments the unresponsiveness of his mistress; (2) bemoans his unhappy lot and seeks to remedy it; (3) regrets the sorry state of the world. In the complaint, which usually takes the form of a monologue, the poet commonly explains his sad mood, describes the causes of it, discusses possible remedies, or appeals to some lady or divinity for help from his distress.	THH, 103.	See LYRIC, LAMENT	
CONFESSION	An acknowledgement, avowal, or disclosure of some sort. An autobiographical writing that discloses personal details not usually revealed, but primarily expresses the author's most profound convictions and deepest thoughts.	Shaw, 91.	See also AUTOBIOGRAPHY	
CONTE	A compact, brief story.	Shaw, 93.	See also TALE, SHORT STORY	
CORONACH	A Gaelic song of lamentation; a funeral dirge.	THH, 110.	See also SONG, DIRGE, LAMENT	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
CORPUS CHRISTI PLAY	A medieval religious play based upon the Bible and performed by town guilds on movable wagons as a part of the procession on Corpus Christi day.	THH, 110.	See also MYSTERY PLAY, MIRACLE PLAY, MORALITY PLAY
COSTUME PIECE	Another name for a historical play or historical novel applied to works of literature that rely heavily on pageantry, romantic action, and methods of dressing.	Shaw, 97.	See also CHRONICLE PLAY, CLOAK AND DAGGER, HISTORY
COURT COMEDY	Comedy written to be performed at the royal court. Characterized in part by: artificial plot, little action, much use of mythology, pageantry, elaborate costuming and scenery, prominence of music (especially songs), lightness of tone, characters numerous and often balanced (arranged in contrasting pairs), artificial structure, style marked by wit, grace, verbal cleverness, quaint imagery, puns.	THH, 111.	See also ARTIFICIAL COMEDY, HIGH COMEDY, COMEDY OF MANNERS
COURTESY BOOK	Book on the character, obligations, and training of the man of the court.	Abrams, 144.	Synonym: ETIQUETTE BOOK
CROWN OF SONNETS	Seven sonnets interlinked by having the last line of the first form the first line of the second, the last line of the second form the first line of the third, etc., with the last line of the last sonnet repeating the first line of the first.	THH, 128.	See also SONNET

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
CRY	A popular genre; the harangue of a barker.	RHD.	
CUBIST POETRY	Poetry that attempts to do in verse what the Cubist painters do on canvas; that is, take the elements of an experience, totally fragment them, and then so rearrange them that a new and meaningful synthesis is made.	THH, 128.	
CYCLE	A collection of poems or romances centering about some outstanding event or character.	THH, 129.	See also ROMANCE, MYSTERY PLAY
CYCLIC DRAMA	The great cycles of medieval religious drama.	THH, 129.	See also MYSTERY PLAY
DÉBAT	A type of literary composition, usually in verse, that was highly popular in the Middle Ages, in which two persons or objects, frequently allegorical, debated some specific topic and then referred it to a judge.	THH, 130-131.	
DETECTIVE STORY	A novel or short story in which a crime, usually a murder--the identity of the perpetrator unknown--is solved by a detective through a logical assembling and interpretation of clues.	THH, 135.	See also NOVEL, SHORT STORY, MYSTERY
DIARY	A day-to-day record of the events in a man's life which he writes for his own use and pleasure, with little or no thought of publication.	Abrams, 15.	Synonym: JOURNAL See also MEMOIRS, AUTOBIOGRAPHY

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
DIDACTIC LITERATURE	A work designed to expound a branch of theoretical or practical knowledge, or to present in an impressive and persuasive imaginative form a moral, religious, or philosophical thesis or doctrine. Such works are distinguished from purely imaginative works (sometimes called "mimetic" works) in which the materials are selected, ordered, and rendered not for the sake of presenting and enforcing knowledge or doctrine, but as ends in themselves, for their inherent human interest and appeal.	Abrams, 39.	See also PROPAGANDIST LITERATURE
DIME NOVEL	A cheap, melodramatic, or sensational work of fiction, usually paperbound.	Shaw, 116.	See also NOVEL, MELODRAMA
DIRECT SATIRE			See FORMAL SATIRE
DIRGE	A poem or song expressing grief on the occasion of death, differing from the elegy in that it is short, less formal, and is usually presented as a text to be sung.	Abrams, 45.	See also ELEGY Synonyms: MONODY, THRENODY
DISCUSSION PLAY	A subtype of the problem play in which the social issue is not incorporated into a plot, but expounded in the dramatic give-and-take of a sustained debate among the characters.	Abrams, 139	See also PROBLEM PLAY

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
DISSERTATION	A formal, involved exposition written to clarify some scholarly problem. Sometimes used interchangeably with "thesis" but the usual practice, at least in college and university circles, is to reserve dissertation for the more elaborate essays and papers written "in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctor's degree."	THH, 146.	See also THESIS	
DITHYRAMBIC VERSE	A type of verse characterized by wild, excited passionate language, probably originally meant to be accompanied by music. Formed the original for the choral element in Greek verse, later developing into the finer quality which we know as Greek tragedy.	THH, 147	See also ODE, SONG, CHANT, CLASSICAL TRAGEDY, GREEK TRAGEDY, FOLK DRAMA	
DITTY	(1) A song, a refrain. Any short, popular, simple melody. (2) Any short, apt saying or idea which runs through a composition.	THH, 147.	See also SONG	
DOGGEREL	Rough, heavy-footed, and jerky versification.	Abrams, 42.	See also HUDIBRASTIC VERSE	
DOMESTIC TRAGEDY			See BOURGEOIS TRAGEDY	
DRAMA	The literary form designed for the theater, where actors take the roles of the characters, perform the indicated action, and utter the written dialogue.	Abrams, 43.	See also POETIC DRAMA Synonym: PLAY	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
DRAMA OF SENSIBILITY			See SENTIMENTAL COMEDY
DRAMATIC LYRIC			See LYRICAL DRAMA
DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE	A type of poem having the following characteristics: (1) A single person, who is not the poet himself, utters the entire poem in a specific situation at a critical moment. (2) This person addresses and interacts with one or more other people; but we know of the auditors' presence and what they say and do only from clues in the discourse of the single speaker. (3) The monologue is so organized that its focus is on the temperament and character that the dramatic speaker unintentionally reveals in the course of what he says.	Abrams, 43.	See also DRAMATIC LYRIC, DRAMATIC POETRY
DRAMATIC POETRY	Poetry which employs dramatic form or some element or elements of dramatic technique as a means of achieving poetic ends. The dramatic quality may result from the use of dialogue, monologue, vigorous diction, blank verse, or the stressing of tense situation and emotional conflict.	THH, 155.	See also DRAMA, DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
DRAME (DRAMA)	A form of play between tragedy and comedy developed by the French in the 18th century and later introduced into England, where it is often called a "drama." It is a serious play, of which the modern problem play is an example.	THH, 158.	See also DRAMA, COMEDY, TRAGEDY, PROBLEM PLAY	
DREAM VISION	A device used in narrative verse that presents a story as though it were told by someone who falls asleep and dreams the events of the poem. Frequently, physical struggles in the narrative involve moral and spiritual conflicts and characters bear such names as "Hypocrisy" and "Fear."	Shaw, 125.	Synonym: DREAM ALLEGORY See also ALLEGORY, FRAME STORY	
DROLL	A short dramatic piece cultivated on the Commonwealth stage in England as a substitute for full-length or serious plays not permitted by the government. A droll was likely to be a short, racy, comic scene selected from some popular play.	THH, 158.		
DUMB SHOW			See PANTOMIME	
DUOLOGUE	A dramatic performance in the form of a dialogue limited to two speakers; a short scene with two actors only.	Shaw, 126.	See also DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
ECHO VERSE	Poetry (or more likely doggerel) in which a line has its closing syllables echoed with a different meaning in the following line.	Shaw, 128.	
ECLOGUE	A formal pastoral dramatic poem that employs dialogue or soliloquy and follows the traditional technique derived from the idylls of Theocritus. Conventional eclogue types include: The singing match The rustic dialogue The dirge (lament) The love-lay The eulogy	THH, 160-161.	See also SINGING MATCH, RUSTIC DIALOGUE, DIRGE, LAMENT, LOVE-LAY, EULOGY, PASTORAL
EDITORIAL	A short essay, expository or argumentative in character, used in newspapers or magazines. The purpose of the editorial is usually to discuss current news events, and the subjects treated may range from matters of purely local importance through county, state, national, and international affairs.	THH, 162.	See also ESSAY
ELEGY	(1) In Greek and Roman literature, the elegy was any poem composed in a special elegiac meter (alternating hexameter and pentameter lines). (2) In England, until the 17th century and even later, the term was often applied to any	Abrams, 45.	See also MONODY, THRENODY, DIRGE, LAMENT, PASTORAL ELEGY

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
	poem of solemn meditation. (3) In present usage, a formal and sustained poem of lament for the death of a particular person.			
ELIZABETHAN TRAGEDY	An example of romantic tragedy plays of the English renaissance modeled after Senecan tragedies, but with more on-stage violence and a generally greater freedom of technique.	THH, 429.	See also REVENGE TRAGEDY, ROMANTIC TRAGEDY	
EMBLEM	An "emblem" consisted of a motto expressing some moral idea and accompanied by a picture and a short poem illustrating the idea. The poem was always short; the picture was symbolic.	THH, 167.		
EMBLEM BOOK	A collection of emblems was known as an emblem book.	THH, 167.		
ENCOMIUM	In Greek literature a poem or speech in praise of a living person before a select group. Today any speech or writing that is of a laudatory nature.	THH, 170.	See also PANEGYRIC, EULOGY	
ENGLISH SONNET	A sonnet consisting of three quatrains and a concluding couplet, and rhymed ababcdcdefefgg.	Abrams, 160.	Synonym: SHAKESPEAREAN SONNET See also SPENSERIAN SONNET, PETRARCHAN SONNET, ITALIAN SONNET, SONNET SEQUENCE, SONNET	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
ENTR'ACTE	A piece of music or a short sketch prepared for use between two acts of a play.	Shaw, 137.	See also INTERLUDE, DIVERTISSEMENT
EPHEMERIDES			See ALMANAC
EPIC	A poetic work that meets at least the following criteria: it is a long narrative poem on a great and serious subject, related in an elevated style, and centered ona heroic or quasi-divine figure on whose actions depends the fate of a tribe, a nation, or the human race.	Abrams, 49.	Synonym: HEROIC POEM See also TRADITIONAL EPIC, LITERARY EPIC, MOCK EPIC
EPIGRAM	Originally, an inscription, but later extended to encompass any very short poem which is polished, condensed, and pointed; often an epigram ends with a surprising or witty turn of thought.	Abrams, 52.	See also APHORISM, APOTHEGM, ADAGE, PROVERB
EPISTLE	Theoretically an epistle is any letter, but in practice the term is limited to formal compositions written by an individual or a group to a distant individual or group. The epistle differs from the common letter in that it is a conscious literary form rather than a spontaneous, chatty, private composition.	THH, 179.	See also LETTER

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
EPISTOLARY NOVEL	A novel in which the narrative is carried forward by letters written by one or more of the characters.	THH, 179.	See also NOVEL
EPITAPH	Inscription used to mark burial places. Commemorative verses or lines appearing on tombs or written as if intended for such use.	THH, 180.	
EPITHALAMION	Poem written to celebrate a marriage; a bridal song.	THH, 180.	See also SONG
EPITOME	A summary or abridgement. A condensed statement of the content of a book. A "miniature representation" of a subject.	THH, 182.	
ERZIEHUNGSROMAN			See BILDUNGSROMAN
ESSAY	A moderately brief prose discussion of a restricted topic.	THH, 183.	See also FORMAL ESSAY, INFORMAL ESSAY
ETIQUETTE BOOK			See COURTESY BOOK
EULOGY	A formal, dignified speech or writing, highly praising a person or thing.	THH, 189.	See also ENCOMIUM
EXEMPLUM	A story told as a particular instance of the general text of a sermon.	Abrams, 6.	See also SERMON, PARABLE

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
EXTRAVAGANZA	A fantastic, extravagant, or irregular composition; most commonly applied to dramatic compositions. Also, any extraordinarily spectacular theatrical production or fantastic musical composition, especially musical caricatures.	THH, 196.	
FABLE	A brief tale, either in prose or verse, told to point a moral. The characters are most frequently animals, but not necessarily so.	THH, 196.	Synonym: APOLOGUE See also BEAST EPIC, BESTIARY, ALLEGORY, FOLKLORE
FABLIAU	A humorous tale popular in medieval French literature, conventionally written in eight-syllable verse. Although fabliaux often had ostensible "morals" appended to them, they lack the serious intention of the fable, and they differ from the fable too in always having human beings as characters and in always maintaining a realistic tone and manner.	THH, 197.	See also FABLE
FAIRY TALE	A story relating mysterious pranks and adventures of supernatural spirits who manifested themselves in the form of diminutive human beings.	THH, 197.	Synonym: MÄRCHEN

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
FAMILIAR ESSAY	A term applied to the more personal intimate type of informal essay. It deals lightly, often humorously, with personal experiences, opinions, and prejudices, stressing especially the unusual or novel in attitude and having to do with the varied aspects of everyday life.	THH, 198.	See also ESSAY, INFORMAL ESSAY
FANCIFUL STORY			
FANTASY	A work which takes place in a nonexistent and unreal world, such as fairyland, or concerns incredible and unreal characters, or employs physical and scientific principles not yet discovered or contrary to present experience, as in science fiction or utopian fictions.	THH, 198-199.	See also SCIENCE FICTION, UTOPIA
FARCE	A type of comedy designed to provoke the audience to simple, hearty laughter. To do so it commonly employs highly exaggerated or caricatured character types, puts them into improbable and ludicrous situations, and makes free use of broad verbal humor and physical horseplay. Usually the farce is an episode in a more complex form of comedy.	Abrams, 27.	See also COMEDY, BURLESQUE, TRAVESTY

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
FARCE-COMEDY	A term sometimes applied to comedies which rely for their interest chiefly on farcical devices, but which contain some truly comic elements which elevate them above most farce.	THH, 199.	See also FARCE, LOW COMEDY
FICTION	Narrative writing drawn from the imagination of the author rather than from history or fact. The term is most frequently associated with novels and short stories, though drama and narrative poetry are also forms of fiction, and fables, parables, fairy tales, and folklore contain fictional elements.	THH, 201-202.	See also NOVEL, SHORT STORY, DRAMA, NARRATIVE POEM, FABLE
FOLK BALLAD			See POPULAR BALLAD
FOLK DRAMA	A type of drama originating in primitive rites of song and dance, especially in connection with agricultural activities at the various seasons, that centered on vegetational deities and goddesses of fertility. It is widely believed that the Greek tragedy developed from such rites.	Abrams, 63.	See also DITHYRAMBIC VERSE
FOLK EPIC			See TRADITIONAL EPIC

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
FOLKLORE	The collective name applied to traditional verbal materials and social rituals that have been handed down solely, or at least primarily, by word of mouth and by example rather than in written form.	Abrams, 63.	See also FOLK DRAMA, FOLK SONG, FOLK TALE, MYTH, FABLE	
FOLK SONGS	A genre including love songs, Christmas carols, work songs, sea chanties, religious songs, drinking songs, children's game songs, and many other types, in addition to their most important form, the narrative song.	Abrams, 64.	See also FOLKLORE, SONG CAROL, CHRISTMAS CAROL, CHANTEY	
FOLKTALE	Strickly defined, a short narrative in prose, of unknown authorship, which has been transmitted orally.	Abrams, 64.	See also FOLKLORE	
FORMAL ESSAY	A relatively impersonal essay in which the author writes as an authority, or at least as highly knowledgeable, on the subject and expounds it in an ordered and thorough fashion.	Abrams, 54.	See also ESSAY, INFORMAL ESSAY	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
FORMAL SATIRE	A type of satire in which the satiric voice speaks out in the first person; this "I" may speak either to the reader or else to a character within the work itself, who is called the adversarius and whose major function is to elicit and guide the satiric speaker's comments. Two types of formal satire are commonly distinguished: Horatian and Juvenalian. The types are defined by the character of the persona whom the author presents as his first-person satiric speaker, and by the attitude and tone that such a persona manifests toward his subject matter and audience.	Abrams, 154.	Synonym: DIRECT SATIRE See also SATIRE, INDIRECT SATIRE, HORATIAN SATIRE, JUVENALIAN SATIRE	
FRAME STORY	A story within a narrative setting, or frame.	Shaw, 167.	See also DREAM VISION, TALE	
FREE VERSE	Verse printed in short lines instead of with the continuity of prose. Has a more controlled rhythm than ordinary prose, but lacks the regular stress-pattern, organized into recurrent feet, of traditional versification. Most free verse also has irregular line lengths and lack rhyme.	Abrams, 66-67.	Synonym: VERS LIBRE	
GENRE	A term taken from the French, is used in literary criticism to signify a literary species or, as we now often say, a "literary form."	Abrams, 67-68.		

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
GENTEEL COMEDY			See SENTIMENTAL COMEDY
GEORGIC	A poem about farming and allied aspects of rural life.	Shaw, 172.	See also PASTORAL
GEST	An old word occasionally found in English, especially in literary titles from the medieval period, meaning a tale of war or adventure.	THH, 212.	See also TALE, CHANSON DE GESTE
GHOST STORY			
GIFT-BOOK	Miscellaneous collections of literary materials--short stories, essays, poetry--published annually in book form for purchase as gifts. Popular in England and America in the 19th century.	THH, 213.	See also ANTHOLOGY
GOLIARDIC VERSE	Lilting Latin verse, usually satiric, composed by university students and wandering scholars in Germany, France, and England in the 12th and 13th centuries.	THH, 214.	
GOTHIC NOVEL	(1) A type of fiction which flourished in the early 19th century. The story takes place in a medieval setting, often in a gloomy castle replete with dungeons, subterranean passages, and sliding panels, and made plentiful use of ghosts, mysterious disappearance, and supernatural occurrences; the principal aim of	Abrams, 69.	Synonym: GOTHIC ROMANCE See also NOVEL, MYSTERY STORY

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
	these novels was to evoke chilling terror in the reader. (2) The term has been extended to denote a type of fiction which lacks the medieval setting but developes a brooding atmosphere of gloom or terror, represents events which are uncanny, or macabre, or melodramatically violent, and often deals with aberrant psychological states.			
GOTHIC ROMANCE			See GOTHIC NOVEL	
GRAND OPERA	The full-scale opera, employing much spectacle (large cast--often including dancers--full orchestra, rich costumes, and elaborate scenery).		See also OPERA	
GREEK COMEDY	Classical comedy of ancient Greece that employed a variety of stock characters.		See also COMEDY	
GREEK TRAGEDY	Classical tragedies of ancient Greece.	THH, 88.	See also CLASSICAL TRAGEDY, DITHYRAMBIC VERSE, FOLK DRAMA	
HAGIOGRAPHY	The lives of the saints, particularly those devoted to the glorification of one or another Irish or British saint. Hence, by extension, a biography which greatly overpraises the virtues of its subject.	THH, 217.	See also BIOGRAPHY	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
HAIKU	A Japanese lyric form that represents the poet's impression of a natural object or scene, viewed at a particular season or month, in exactly seventeen syllables.	Abrams, 78.	See also TANKA
HARLEQUINADE	A play in which a "harlequin" or buffoon stars.	THH, 217.	See also COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE, PANTOMIME
HEROIC DRAMA	Plays of the Restoration period that attempted to emulate the epic by including a large-scale warrior as hero, an action involving the fate of an empire, and an elevated and elaborate style, usually cast in the epigrammatic form of the closed heroic couplet. A noble hero and heroine are typically represented in a situation in which their passionate love conflicts with the demands of honor and the hero's patriotic duty to his country.	Abrams, 72-73.	See also DRAMA, HEROIC TRAGEDY, EPIC
HEROIC POEM			See EPIC
HEROIC TRAGEDY	An heroic drama in which the conflict ends in disaster for the main characters.	Abrams, 73.	See also HEROIC DRAMA

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
HIGH COMEDY	A type of comedy that evokes "intellectual laughter"--thoughtful laughter from spectators who remain emotionally detached from the action--at the spectacle of folly, pretentiousness, and incongruity in human behavior. Some critics find its highest form in the wit combats that occur in the comedy of manners.	Abrams, 27.	See also COMEDY, COMEDY OF MANNERS, LOW COMEDY
HISTORY			See also HISTORICAL NOVEL
HISTORICAL NOVEL	A type of novel that takes its setting and some of its characters and events from history; the term is usually applied only if the historical milieu and events are fairly elaborately developed, and important to the central narrative.	Abrams, 113.	See also NOVEL
HISTORICAL PLAY	The Elizabethan chronicle plays are often called history plays.	Abrams, 24.	See also CHRONICLE PLAY
HISTORICAL STORY			
HOKKU			See HAIKU

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
HOMILY	A form of oral religious instruction given by an ordained minister with a church congregation as audience. The homily is sometimes distinguished from the sermon in that the sermon usually is on a theme drawn from a scriptural text and a homily usually gives practical moral counsel rather than discussion of doctrine.	THH, 225.	See also SERMON	
HORATIAN ODE	A type of ode modeled on the matter, tone, and forms of the odes of the Roman Horace. These odes are calm, meditative, and restrained, written in a single, repeated stanza form.	Abrams, 117.	See also ODE, PINDARIC ODE	
HORATIAN SATIRE	A type of formal satire in which the character of the speaker is that of an urbane, witty, and tolerant man of the world, who is moved more often to wry amusement than to indignation at the spectacle of human folly, pretentiousness, and hypocrisy, and who uses a related and informal language to evoke a smile at human follies and absurdities--sometimes including his own.	Abrams, 154-155.	See also SATIRE, FORMAL SATIRE, JUVENALIAN SATIRE	
HOW AND WHY STORY				

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
HUDIBRASTIC POEM	A variety of low burlesque patterned after Samuel Butler's Hudibras, which satirizes rigid Puritanism by describing the adventures of a Puritan knight, Sir Hudibras; instead of the doughty deeds and dignified style of the traditional genre of the chivalric romance, however, we find the knightly hero experiencing humiliating misadventures which are described in doggerel verse and a ludicrously colloquial idiom.	Abrams, 19.	See also BURLESQUE, CHIVALRIC ROMANCE, DOGGEREL
HUMANITARIAN NOVEL			See SOCIOLOGICAL NOVEL
HUMOROUS STORY			
HYMN	A lyric poem expressing religious emotion and generally intended to be sung by a chorus.	THH, 230-231.	See also ANTHEM, TROPE
IDYL			See PASTORAL
IMPROBABLE STORY			
INDIRECT SATIRE	A type of satire cast in the form of a narrative instead of direct address, in which the objects of the satire are characters who make themselves and their opinions ridiculous by what they think, say, and do, and are sometimes made even more ridiculous by the author's comments and narrative style.	Abrams, 155.	See also SATIRE, DIRECT SATIRE

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
INFORMAL ESSAY	As distinguished from the formal essay, the informal essay is less obviously serious in purpose, usually shorter, freer of structure, easier of style, and is written to please and entertain rather than to instruct.	THH, 241.	See also ESSAY, FORMAL ESSAY, FAMILIAR ESSAY
INTERLUDE	A term applied to a variety of short entertainments, including secular farces and witty dialogues with a religious or political point. Often shown between the courses of a feast or between the acts of a longer play.	Abrams, 100-101.	See also DROLL
IRREGULAR ODE	A poem which imitates the Pindaric ode's style and matter but disregards the recurrent strophic triad, allowing each stanza to find its own pattern of varying line lengths, number of lines, and rhyme scheme. Has been the most common type of English ode since its introduction in the mid-1600's.	Abrams, 116.	See ODE, PINDARIC ODE
ITALIAN SONNET	A sonnet consisting of two main parts: an octave (8 lines) rhyming abbabba and a sestet (6 lines) rhyming cdecde or some variant, such as cdccdc.	Abrams, 160.	Synonym: PETRARCHAN SONNET See also SONNET, ENGLISH SONNET

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
JEST-BOOK	A name applied to a collection of humorous, witty, or satirical anecdotes and jokes which had some vogue in England and some European countries in the 16th century and later.	THH, 250.	See also ANECDOTE, ANTHOLOGY
JINGLE	A piece of verse that repeats sounds, contains numerous rhymes, and frequently is humorous, lighthearted, and nonsensical.	Shaw, 212.	See also LIGHT VERSE
JOURNAL	(1) A form of autobiographical writing, in which a day-by-day account of events and a record of personal impressions are kept. It is usually less intimate than a diary and more obviously chronological than an autobiography. (2) Any periodical publication that contains news or deals with matters of current interest in any particular sphere.	THH, 252.	See also DIARY, AUTOBIOGRAPHY, MEMOIRS See also ANNUAL
JUVENALIAN SATIRE	A type of formal satire in which the character of the speaker is that of a serious moralist who uses a dignified and public style of utterance to decry modes of vice and error which are no less dangerous because they are ridiculous, and who undertakes to evoke contempt, moral indignation, or an unillusioned sadness at the aberrations of men.	Abrams, 155.	See also SATIRE, FORMAL SATIRE, HORATIAN SATIRE

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
KABUKI	Popular drama of Japan, characterized by elaborate costuming, stylized acting, and rhythmic dialogue.	Shaw, 214.	See also NOH
KÜNSTLERROMAN	"Artist-novel." Represents the development of a novelist or other artist into the stage of maturity in which he recognizes his artistic destiny and achieves mastery of his artistic craft.	Abrams, 113.	See also BILDUNGSROMAN, NOVEL
LAI	Term applied to a variety of poems by medieval French writers in the latter twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Some lais were lyric, but most of them were short romantic narratives written in octasyllabic couplets.	Abrams, 8[illegible].	See also BRETON LAY
LAMENT	A poem expressing some great grief, usually more intense and more personal than that expressed in a complaint.	THH, 254.	See also COMPLAINT
LAMPOON	A sharp satire, in prose or verse, directed against an individual or institution. A lampoon severely ridicules the character, intentions, or behavior of a person or society.	Shaw, 217.	See also SATIRE
LAY			See LAI

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
LEGEND	(1) A narrative or tradition handed down from the past. A legend is distinguished from a myth in that the legend has more of historical truth and perhaps less of the supernatural. (2) Any brief explanatory comment accompanying paintings, maps, etc.	THH, 256.	See also MYTH	
LETTER	A note or epistle exchanged between acquaintances, friends, or commercial firms. A letter, in one sense, is distinguished from an epistle in that a letter presents personal and natural relationships among friends, whereas epistles are more usually formal documents prepared with a view to their being read by some public.	THH, 257.	See also EPISTLE	
LIGHT OPERA	A form of opera which lacks the dignity and seriousness of grand opera and usually stresses sentiment rather than passion. It is unlike comic opera in that spoken dialogue is not commonly employed.	THH, 257.	See also OPERA, COMIC OPERA	
LIGHT VERSE	Short lyric poems, gay and bantering in tone, sportive in mood, and often sophisticated in subject and formal in treatment.	THH, 258.	See also PARODY, LIMERICK, OCCASIONAL VERSE, EPIGRAMS, CLERIHEW, NONSENSE VERSE Synonym: VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
LIMERICK	A form of light verse, a particularly popular type of nonsense verse. Its composition follows a rather definite pattern: five anapestic lines of which the first, second, and fifth, consisting of three feet, rhyme; and the third and fourth lines, consisting of two feet, rhyme.	THH, 258	See also LIGHT VERSE, NONSENSE VERSE
LITERARY BALLAD	A narrative poem written by a learned poet in deliberate imitation of the form and spirit of the popular ballad.	Abrams, 14.	See also BALLAD, POPULAR BALLAD Synonym: ART BALLAD
LITERARY EPIC	An epic composed by a sophisticated poetic craftsman in deliberate imitation of the traditional epic form.	Abrams, 49.	See also EPIC, TRADITIONAL EPIC Synonym: ART EPIC
LITURGICAL DRAMA	A term sometimes applied to the early phase of medieval religious drama when the mystery plays were performed as a part or an extension of the liturgical service of the church. Term also sometimes used for the mystery plays developed from the liturgy.	THH, 265.	See also MYSTERY PLAY, MEDIEVAL DRAMA
LOCAL COLOR WRITING	Writing which exploits the speech, dress, mannerisms, habits of thought, and topography peculiar to a certain region. Marked by the attempt at accurate dialect reporting, a tendency toward the use of eccentrics as characters,	THH, 266.	See also NOVEL, SHORT STORY, REALISTIC NOVEL

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
	and the use of sentimentalized pathos or whimsical humor in plotting. A subdivision of realism.			
LOVE-LAY	An eclogue in which a shepherd may sing a song of courtship or a shepherd or shepherdess may complain of disappointment in love.	THH, 160.	See also ECLOGUE	
LOVE SONG			See also SONG	
LOW COMEDY	A type of comedy that makes little or no intellectual appeal, but undertakes to arouse laughter by jokes, or "gags," and by slapstick humor or boisterous or clownish physical activity; one of the components of farce.	Abrams, 27.	See also COMEDY, HIGH COMEDY, FARCE	
LULLABY	A cradlesong. A song used to lull a child to sleep.	Shaw, 227.	See also SONG, FOLK SONG	
LYRIC	A brief, subjective poem strongly marked by imagination, melody, and emotion, and creating for the reader a single, unified impression.	THH, 269.	See also SONNET, SONG, MADRIGAL, ODE, HYMN, ELEGY, BALLAD, VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ, RONDEL, RONDEAU, HAIKU, DRAMATIC LYRIC, DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE	
LYRICAL DRAMA	A term used for a dramatic poem in which the form of drama is used to express lyric themes (author's own ideas of life, or his emotions) instead of relying	THH, 270.	See also LYRIC, DRAMATIC POETRY Synonym: LYRICAL DRAMA	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
	upon a story as the basis of the action.			
MACARONIC VERSE	A type of humorous verse which mingles two or more languages. More especially it refers to poems incorporating modern words (given Latin or Greek endings) with Latin or Greek.	THH, 271.		
MADRIGAL	(1) A short lyric, usually dealing with love or a pastoral theme and designed for--or at least suitable for--a musical setting. (2) In the Elizabethan period, a kind of song sung without accompaniment by five or six voices with intricate interweaving of words and melody.	THH, 271-272.	See also LYRIC, PASTORAL	
MAGICAL STORY				
MAKE-BELIEVE STORY				
MÄRCHEN			See FAIRY TALE	
MASKED COMEDY			See COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE	
MASQUE	An elaborate form of court entertainment, combining poetic drama, music, song, dance, splendid costuming and stage spectacle. A plot--often slight, and mainly mythological and allegorical--served to hold together these diverse elements. The characters, who wore masks were played by	Abrams, 90.	See also POETIC DRAMA, ANTI-MASQUE	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
CHRONICLE PLAY	Dramatic rendering of the historical materials in the English Chronicles by Raphael Holinshed and others.	Abrams, 24.	See also HISTORY PLAY
CLASSICAL TRAGEDY	This term may refer to the tragedy of the ancient Greeks and Romans or to tragedies based upon Greek or Roman subjects, or to modern tragedies modeled upon Greek or Roman tragedy or written under the influence of the critical doctrines of classicism.	THH, 88.	See also TRAGEDY, SENECAN TRAGEDY
CLERIHEW	A form of light verse which in two couplets of irregular meter touches on a well-known person whose name forms one of the rhymes.	THH, 90.	See also LIGHT VERSE
CLIFF-HANGER	A melodramatic adventure serial (in films or magazines) in which each installment ends in suspense.	Shaw, 79.	See also MELODRAMA
CLOAK AND DAGGER	A play or novel that deals with espionage or intrigue and is highly dramatic and romantic.	Shaw, 79.	See also ROMANTIC NOVEL
CLOSET DRAMA	A work written in the form of a drama, but intended to be read rather than to be performed in the theater.	Abrams, 43.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
	ladies and gentlemen of the court, including royalty itself. The play concluded with a dance of the players, who doffed their masks and took members of the audience for partners.		
MATIN	A morning song or prayer.	Shaw, 233.	See also ALBA, AUBADE
MAXIM			See ADAGE
MEDIEVAL DRAMA	A general term used to include all forms of drama in the Middle Ages, though the religious drama and its allied forms are usually meant by the phase. An outgrowth of the liturgical services of the church.	THH, 278.	See also LITURGICAL DRAMA, MYSTERY PLAY, MIRACLE PLAY, MORALITY PLAY, TROPE, FOLK DRAMA, INTERLUDE, TROPE
MEDIEVAL ROMANCE	A story of adventure in which the chief parts are played by knights, famous kings, or distressed ladies, acting most often under the impulse of love, religious faith, or, in many, the mere desire for adventure. Exhibits mystery and fantasy and takes place in a medieval setting.	THH, 278,	See also CHIVALRIC ROMANCE, ARTHURIAN LEGEND, GOTHIC NOVEL
MELODRAMA	A play based on a romantic plot and developed sensationally with little regard for convincing motivation and with a constant appeal to the emotions of the audience. Typically has a happy ending, but some tragedies are also melodramas.	THH, 280.	See also DRAMA, TRAGEDY

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
MEMOIR	A form of autobiographical writing dealing with the recollections of prominent people or people who have been a part of or have witnessed significant events. Memoirs differ from autobiography proper in that they are usually concerned with personalities and actions other than those of the writer himself, whereas the autobiography lays a heavier stress on the inner and private life of its subject.	THH, 281.	See also AUTOBIOGRAPHY, DIARY, JOURNAL
MENIPPEAN SATIRE	A type of indirect satire written in prose--though with interpolated passages of verse. A miscellaneous form often held together by a loosely constructed narrative. Its major feature is a series of extended dialogues and debates (often conducted at a banquet or party) in which a group of immensely loquacious eccentrics, pedants, literary people, and representatives of various professions or philosophical points of view serve to make ludicrous the intellectual attitudes they typify by the arguments they urge in their support.	Abrams, 155.	Synonym: VARRONIAN SATIRE See also SATIRE, INDIRECT SATIRE
METRICAL ROMANCE	A romantic tale in verse.	THH, 286-287.	See also MEDIEVAL ROMANCE, ROMANCE TALE

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
MIME	A form of popular comedy developed by the ancients, that portrayed the events of everyday life by means of dancing, imitative gestures, and witty dialogue.	THH, 288.	See also PANTOMIME, MYSTERY PLAY, INTERLUDE	
MIRACLE PLAY	A type of late medieval drama having as its subject a story from the Scriptures, or else the life and martyrdom of a saint. In the usage of some historians of drama, "miracle play" denotes only dramas based on saints' lives, and the term "mystery play" is applied to dramas based on the Old and New Testaments.	Abrams, 100.	See also MYSTERY PLAY, MORALITY PLAY, INTERLUDE Synonym: SAINT'S PLAY	
MOCK EPIC	A literary form which burlesques epic poetry by treating a trivial subject in the "grand style," or which uses the epic formulas to make ridiculous a trivial subject by ludicrously overstating it.	THH, 292.	Synonym: MOCK HEROIC POEM See also EPIC, PARODY	
MOCK HERIOC POEM			See MOCK EPIC	
MONODY	An elegy or dirge presented as the utterance of a single person.	Abrams, 45.	See also ELEGY, DIRGE, LAMENT, THRENODY	
MONOLOGUE	A composition, oral or written, presenting the discourse of one speaker only. A soliloquy. Any speech or narrative presented wholly by one person.	THH, 292.	See also DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
MORALITY PLAY	A type of late medieval poetic drama distinguished from the religious drama proper, such as the mystery play, by the fact that it was a dramatized allegory in which the abstract virtues and vices appear in personified form, the good and the bad usually being engaged in a struggle for the soul of man.	THH, 293.	See also ALLEGORY, POETIC DRAMA, MYSTERY PLAY, INTERLUDE	
MUMMERY	A simple dramatic performance usually presented by players masked or disguised. A farcical presentation, a sort of pantomime.	THH, 295.	Synonym: PANTOMIME See also MASQUE, FARCE	
MUSICAL COMEDY	Closely related, especially in its earlier forms, to burlesque and vaudeville, musical comedy developed in the early 20th century in England and America into one of the most popular of all dramatic forms. Though much use is made of music, both vocal and orchestral, the dialogue is spoken, not sung.	THH, 296.	See also BURLESQUE, VAUDEVILLE, COMEDY	
MYSTERY NOVEL			See MYSTERY STORY	
MYSTERY PLAY	A medieval religious play based upon Biblical history; a Scriptural play.	THH, 296.	See also MIRACLE PLAY, MORALITY PLAY, PAGEANT	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
MYSTERY STORY	A short story or novel in which the element of mystery or terror plays a controlling part. It is applied to such various types of fiction as the detective story, the Gothic novel, the story of strange or frightening adventure, the "suspense" novel, the tale of espionage, the tale of crime, and the story in which the protagonist, usually a woman, is relentlessly pursued by some unknown but alarming menace.	THH, 297.	See also DETECTIVE STORY, GOTHIC NOVEL, Synonym: MYSTERY NOVEL	
MYTH	Anonymous stories having their roots in the primitive folk-beliefs of races or nations and presenting supernatural episodes as a means of interpreting natural events in an effort to make concrete and particular a special perception of man or a cosmic view. Differ from legends in that they have less of historical background and more of the supernatural; differ from fable in that they are less concerned with moral didacticism and are the product of racial group rather than the creation of an individual.	THH, 298.	See also LEGEND, FABLE	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
NARRATIVE ESSAY	An informal essay in narrative form--anecdote, incident, or allegory. It differs from a short story not only in its simpler structure, but especially in its essay-like intent, the story being a means of developing an idea rather than being an end in itself.	THH, 301.	See also ESSAY, INFORMAL ESSAY, ANECDOTE, ALLEGORY, SHORT STORY	
NARRATIVE POEM	A non-dramatic poem which tells a story or presents a narrative, whether simple or complex, long or short.	THH, 301.	Synonym: STORY POEM See also EPIC, BALLAD, METRICAL ROMANCE	
NATURE POEM				
NEW NOVEL	A modern novel which may lack such standard novelistic elements as plot, characterization, descriptions of states of mind, normal relations of time and space, and some frame of reference for the guidance of the reader. Often simply presents the reader with a sequence of perceptions, mainly visual, from which the reader is supposed to gradually infer what is going on in the story.	Abrams, 114.	See also NOVEL	
NOCTURNE	A poetic and often sentimental composition, expressing moods supposed to be especially appropriate to evening or night time.	THH, 317	See also LYRIC, SONG	
NOH	Classic drama of Japan; noh plays are formal, restrained, subtle.	Shaw, 255.	See also KABUKI	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
NONSENSE STORY			
NONSENSE VERSE	A variety of light verse entertaining because of its strong rhythmic quality and lack of logic or consecutive development of thought. In addition to the marked rhythm, nonsense verse is often characterized by the presence of coined nonsense words, a mingling of words from various languages, "tongue-twisters," and freakish arrangements of type according to the fancy of the writer.	THH, 317-318	See also MACARONIC VERSE, LIMERICK, LIGHT VERSE, DOGGEREL
NOVEL	In its broadest sense designates any extended fictional prose narrative. In practice, however, its use is customarily restricted to narratives in which the representation of character occurs either in a static condition or in the process of development as the result of events or actions. Often the term implies that some organizing principle--plot or theme or idea--should be present in a narrative that is called a novel.	THH, 318.	See also ROMANCE, SHORT STORY, HISTORICAL NOVEL, HUMANITARIAN NOVEL, NEW NOVEL, NOVEL OF CHARACTER, NOVEL OF INCIDENT, NOVEL OF MANNERS, NOVEL OF THE SOIL, REGIONAL NOVEL, NOVELETTE, PICARESQUE NARRATIVE, PROBLEM NOVEL, PROPAGANDA NOVEL, ROMAN À CLEF, ROMAN-FLEUVE, ROMAN À THÈSE, ROMANTIC NOVEL, SENTIMENTAL NOVEL, SOCIOLOGICAL NOVEL
NOVEL OF CHARACTER	A novel which places its major emphasis upon the representation and development of character rather than upon exciting episodes, as in the novel of incident, or unity of plot or structure.	THH, 324.	See also NOVEL, NOVEL OF INCIDENT

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
NOVEL OF INCIDENT	A novel in which action and more or less unrelated episodes dominate, and plot and character are subordinate.	Abrams, 324.	See also NOVEL, NOVEL OF CHARACTER	
NOVEL OF MANNERS	A novel, among the dominant forces of which are the social customs, manners, conventions, and habits, of a definite social class at a particular time and place.	THH, 324.	See also NOVEL, HISTORICAL NOVEL, COMEDY OF MANNERS	
NOVEL OF SENSIBILITY			See SENTIMENTAL NOVEL	
NOVEL OF THE SOIL	A special kind of regional novel, in which the lives of people struggling for existence in remote rural sections are starkly portrayed.	THH, 325.	See also NOVEL, REGIONAL NOVEL	
NOVELETTE	A work of prose fiction of intermediate length, longer than a short story and shorter than a novel.	THH, 325.	See also NOVEL, SHORT STORY	
NOVELLA	Early Italian and French tales or short stories that are the historical antecedents of the modern novel.	THH, 325.	See also NOVEL, SHORT STORY, PICARESQUE NARRATIVE	
NURSERY RHYME				
OCCASIONAL POEM	A poem written to adorn or memorialize a specific occasion, such as a birthday, a marriage, a death, a military engagement or victory, the dedication of a	Abrams, 116	See also EPITHALAMION	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
	public building, or the opening performance of a play.			
ODE	A long lyric poem, serious in subject, elevated in style, and elaborate in its stanzaic structure.	Abrams, 116.	See also REGULAR ODE, IRREGULAR ODE, HORATIAN ODE	
OLD ENGLISH POETRY	Verse written by English poets in the period before 1100. Employed an accentual system, consisting of equal numbers of accented syllables to the line and varying numbers of unaccented syllables. The normal line fell into two parts, each having two accented syllables, separated by a pause (caesura). The accents are grammatical--i.e., they fall on syllables which would normally carry stress in that particular construction. The halflines (hemistichs) are bound by alliteration, one or both the accented syllables of the first alliterating with the first accented syllable of the second and much more rarely with the second accented syllable.	THH, 329.	Synonym: ANGLO-SAXON POETRY	
ONE-ACT PLAY	A short play with no intermissions having a technique that is highly flexible, the most important demand being for unity of effect, with consequent vigor of dialogue, stressing of character, and economy of narrative materials.	THH, 330.	See DRAMA	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
OPERA	A musical drama in which the dialogue instead of being spoken is sung, to the accompaniment of instrumental music.	THH, 331.	See also DRAMA, MASQUE	
OPÉRA BOUFFE	A French term for a very light form of comic opera developed from vaudeville music.	THH, 332.	See also OPERA, COMIC OPERA	
OPERETTA			See COMIC OPERA	
ORATION	A formal speech intended to inspire some action; characterized by elevated style and diction and by studied delivery.	THH, 332.	See also EULOGY	
PAEAN	A song of praise or joy.	THH, 335.	See also SONG, HYMN, ANTHEM	
PAGEANT	(1) A scaffold or stage on which dramas were performed in the Middle Ages. (2) Plays performed on such stages. (3) Modern dramatic spectacles designed to celebrate some historical event, often of local interest.	THH, 336.	See also MEDIEVAL DRAMA, MYSTERY PLAY	
PANEGYRIC	A formal written or oral composition lauding a person.	THH, 337.	See also ENCOMIUM, EULOGY	
PANTOMIME	A form of dramatic activity in which silent motion, gesture, facial expression, and costume are relied upon to express emotional or narrative situations.	THH, 338	Synonym: DUMB SHOW	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
PARABLE	An illustrative story answering a question or pointing a moral or lesson.	THH, 338.	See also ALLEGORY, FABLE, EXEMPLUM
PARODY	A work that imitates the serious materials and manner of another work, or the characteristic style of a particular author, and applies it to a lowly or grossly discordant subject.	Abrams, 18.	See also MOCK EPIC, TRAVESTY, BURLESQUE, HUDIBRASTIC POEM, SATIRE Synonym: PASTICHE
PASTICHE			See PARODY
PASTORAL	An elaborately conventional poem expressing an urban poet's nostalgic image of the peace and simplicity of the life of shepherds and other rural folk in an idealized natural setting.	Abrams, 120.	Synonym: IDYL, ECLOGUE, BUCOLIC POEM See also PASTORAL ELEGY
PASTORAL DRAMA	A play that exhibits pastoral influences.	THH, 343.	See also PASTORAL, ECLOGUE, PASTORAL ROMANCE
PASTORAL ELEGY	An elegy which represents both the mourner and the one he mourns--who is usually also a poet--as shepherds.	Abrams, 45.	See also ELEGY
PASTORAL ROMANCE	A prose narrative, usually long and complicated in plot, in which the characters bear pastoral names and in which pastoral conventions dominate. Often contains interspersed songs.	THH, 344.	See also PASTORAL, ROMANCE

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
PASTOURELLE	A medieval type of dialogue poem in which a shepherdess is wooed by a man of higher social rank.	THH, 344.	See PASTORAL	
PATTER SONG	A comic song depending upon rapid delivery.	Shaw, 280.	See also SONG	
PERSONAL ESSAY	A kind of informal essay which utilizes an intimate style, some autobiographical content or interest, and an urbane conversational manner.	THH, 349.	See also ESSAY, INFORMAL ESSAY	
PETRARCHAN SONNET			See ITALIAN SONNET	
PHILLIPPIC	Any speech or harangue bitterly invective in character; a discourse filled with denunciations and accusations.	THH, 350.	See also SPEECH	
PICARESQUE NARRATIVE (PICARESQUE NOVEL)	Prose stories originating in 16th century Spain that typically took as their subject the escapades of an insouciant rascal who lives by his wits, and shows little if any alteration of character through the long succession of his adventures; a type of fiction realistic in manner, episodic in structure, and usually satiric in aim. An historical predecessor of the novel.	Abrams, 111.	See also NOVEL	
PINDARIC ODE			See REGULAR ODE	
PLAINSONG	Any simple, unadorned melody.	Shaw, 288.	See also SONG	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
PLAINT	Verse expressing grief or tribulation; a chant of lamentation; a lament; an expression of sorrow.	THH, 354.	See also COMPLAINT, LAMENT
PLAY			See DRAMA
POEM	A composition characterized by the presence of imagination, emotion, truth (significant meaning), sense impressions, and a dignified and concrete language; expressed rhythmically and with an orderly arrangement of parts and possessing within itself a unity; the whole written with the dominant purpose of giving aesthetic or emotional pleasure.	THH, 358-359.	See also VERSE
POETIC DRAMA	A drama in which the dialogue is written in verse (in English the verse is usually blank verse).	Abrams, 43.	
POETRY			See POEM
POPULAR BALLAD	A song, transmitted orally, which tells a story. Usually exists in many variant forms. Typically, the popular ballad is dramatic, impersonal; the narrator begins with the climactic episode, tells the story tersely by means of action and dialogue (sometimes by means of dialogue alone), and tells it without expressing his personal attitudes or feelings.	Abrams, 13.	Synonym: FOLK BALLAD, TRADITIONAL BALLAD See also BALLAD, LITERARY BALLAD

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
PRIMARY EPIC			See TRADITIONAL EPIC
PROBLEM NOVEL	A name given to that type of prose fiction which derives its chief interest from working out, through characters and incidents, some central problem.	THH, 379.	See also NOVEL, PROPAGANDA NOVEL, PROBLEM PLAY
PROBLEM PLAY	A fairly recent dramatic type in which the situation of the protagonist is so rendered as to indicate that it represents a contemporary sociological problem.	Abrams, 139.	See also DISCUSSION PLAY
PROGNOSTICATIONS			See ALMANAC
PROPAGANDA NOVEL	A novel dealing with a special social, political, economic, or moral issue or problem and strongly advocating a doctrinaire solution.	THH, 382.	See also PROBLEM NOVEL, PROPAGANDIST LITERATURE, DIDACTIC LITERATURE
PROPAGANDIST LITERATURE	A species of didactic literature which undertakes to move the reader to take a position, or direct action, on a particular moral or political issue of the time at which the work is written.	Abrams, 40.	See also DIDACTIC LITERATURE
PROSE	The sustained use of language as we ordinarily speak it, as distinguished from language patterned into recurrent units of meter, which we call verse.	Abrams, 139.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
PROSE POETRY	A form of prose with marked (although preferably not too regular) cadence and frequently with extensive use of figurative language and imagery.	THH, 383.	See also PROSE, POEM	
PROSE ROMANCE	A type of prose fiction that typically deploys simplified characters, larger than life, who are sharply discriminated as heroes and villains, masters and victims; the protagonist is often solitary, and isolated from a social context; the plot emphasizes adventure, and is often in the form of a quest for an ideal, or the pursuit of an enemy; and the nonrealistic and occasionally melodramatic events are sometimes claimed to project in symbolic form the primal desires, hopes, and terrors in the depths of the human mind, and to be therefore analogous to the materials of dream, myth, ritual, and folklore.	Abrams, 112.	See also NOVEL, ROMANCE	
PROVERB	A sentence or phrase which briefly and strikingly expresses some recognized truth or shrewd observation about practical life and which has been preserved by oral tradition, though it may be preserved and transmitted in written literature as well.	THH, 385.	See also ADAGE, APHORISM, EPIGRAM	
PSALM	A lyrical religious composition of praise.	THH, 385.	See also LYRIC	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
PSYCHOLOGICAL NOVEL	Prose fiction which places more than the usual amount of emphasis on interior characterization, and on the motives, circumstances, and internal action which springs from, and develops, external action.	THH, 386-387.	See also NOVEL, PROBLEM NOVEL	
PUPPET PLAY				
PURE POETRY	A term applied to poetry which is free from conceptualized statement, instructive content, or moral preachment; or those portions of a poem which remain after such materials as can be paraphrased adequately in prose are removed.	THH, 388.		
REAL LIFE STORY				
REALISTIC COMEDY	Any comedy employing the methods of realism; opposed to the romantic comedy. Deals with urban life, is strongly satirical and sometimes cynical in tone, is interested in both individuals and types of character, and rests upon an observation of contemporary life. The appeal is intellectual and the tone coarse.	THH, 399.	See also COMEDY, ROMANTIC COMEDY, COMEDY OF HUMORS, COMEDY OF MANNERS	
REALISTIC NOVEL	A work of prose fiction that attempts to accurately describe real life, without exaggeration or other distortion.			

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
REGIONAL NOVEL	A novel that emphasizes the setting, speech, and customs of a particular locality, not merely as local color, but as important conditions affecting the temperament of the characters, and their ways of thinking, feeling and acting.	Abrams, 113.	See also NOVEL, NOVEL OF THE SOIL	
REGULAR ODE	A type of English ode that is done in imitation of the form of the odes of Pindar. Complex stanzas are patterned in sets of three: strophe, antistrophe, and epode, with all the strophes and antistrophes written in one kind of stanza, and all the epodes in another.	Abrams, 116.	Synonym: PINDARIC ODE	
RELIGIOUS DRAMA			See LITURGICAL DRAMA	
REQUIEM	A chant embodying a prayer for the repose of the dead; a dirge.	THH, 411.	See also CHANT, DIRGE	
RESTORATION COMEDY	A comedy of manners written during the Restoration period.	Abrams, 26.	See also COMEDY OF MANNERS, COMEDY	
REVENGE TRAGEDY	A type of Senecan tragedy, written for the popular stage, that made use of Seneca's favorite materials of revenge, murder, ghosts, mutilation, and carnage. While Seneca had relegated such matters to long reports of off-stage actions by messengers, the Elizabethan writers had them acted out on stage to satisfy the		See also SENECAN TRAGEDY, ACADEMIC TRAGEDY, TRAGEDY OF BLOOD	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
	audience's appetite for violence and horror.			
REVIEW	A notice of a current book or play, published in a periodical. The review announces a work, describes its subject, discusses its method and its technical qualities, and examines its merit when it is compared with other similar works; its function is to give its reader an accurate idea of the book under consideration, in order that he may decide whether he wishes to read it or not.	THH, 412.		
REVUE	A light musical entertainment without connected plot and consisting of a variety of songs, dances, choruses, and skits. Satiric comment on contemporary personalities and events forms a characteristic element as does the effort to impress by a spectacular display of magnificence in setting and scenery.	THH, 415.	See also MUSICAL COMEDY, EXTRAVAGANZA	
ROMAN À CLEF	"Novel with a key." A novel in which the reader is expected to identify, within the apparent fiction, actual people or events.	Abrams, 153.	See also NOVEL	
ROMAN À THÈSE	A novel with a thesis.	Shaw, 326.	See also PROBLEM NOVEL, PROPAGANDA NOVEL, NOVEL	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
ROMAN-FLEUVE	A novel in which generations of members of a family are told about in long and leisurely narrative.	Shaw, 326.	See also NOVEL	
ROMANCE	A form of narrative written in prose or verse that represents (in contrast to the epic) not a heroic age of tribal wars, but a courtly and chivalric age, often one of highly developed manners and civility; its standard plot is one of quest and adventure, undertaken by a single knight; it introduces a heroine, and frequently its central interest is courtly love, together with tournaments fought and dragons and monsters slain for a damsel's sake; it stresses the chivalric ideas of courage, honor, mercifulness to an opponent, and exquisite and elaborate manners; and it delights in wonders and marvels.	Abrams, 22.	See also PROSE ROMANCE, ROMANTIC COMEDY, CHIVALRIC ROMANCE, ARTHURIAN LEGEND	
ROMANTIC COMEDY	Drama concerned with a love affair that involves a beautiful and idealized heroine (sometimes disguised as a man); the course of this love does not run smooth, but overcomes all difficulties to end in a happy union. Many of the boy-meets-girl plots of later writers are instances of romantic comedy.	Abrams, 26.	See also COMEDY, ROMANCE	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
ROMANTIC EPIC	A type of long narrative poem developed by Italian Renaissance poets by combining the materials and something of the method of the medieval romance with the manner and technique of the classical epic.	THH, 425.	See also ROMANCE, EPIC	
ROMANTIC NOVEL	A type of novel market by strong interest in action and presenting episodes often based on love, adventure, and combat.	THH, 425	See also NOVEL	
ROMANTIC TRAGEDY	Non-classical tragedy--e.g., Elizabethan tragedy. Differs from classical tragedy in its greater freedom of technique, its wider scope of theme and treatment, its greater emphasis on character (as compared with emphasis on plot), its looser structure, its freer employment of imagination, its greater variety of style, and its easy readiness to admit humorous and even grotesque elements.	THH, 429.	See also TRAGEDY, CLASSICAL TRAGEDY	
RONDEAU	A set French verse pattern, artificial but very popular with many English poets. Generally used for light and fanciful expression.	THH, 423.	See also RONDEL	
RONDEL	A variation of the French roundeau pattern. Characterized by its 11-line form and the presence, in the 4th and 11th lines, of a	THH, 433.	See also ROUNDEAU	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
	refrain taken, as in the roundeau, from the first part of the first line.			
ROUND	A musical composition in which several voices follow each other in singing lines at equally spaced time intervals.	Shaw, 328.	See also SONG, CATCH	
ROUNDEL	A variation of the French rondeau pattern; characterized by its 11-line form and the presence, in the fourth and eleventh lines, of a refrain taken, as in the rondeau, from the first part of the first line.	THH, 433.	See RONDEAU	
ROUNDELAY	A modification of the rondel; a simple poem or song of about 14 lines in which part of one lines frequently recurs as a refrain.	THH, 433.	See also RONDEL	
RUNE	An aphorism, poem, or saying with mystical meaning; a riddle.	Shaw, 330.	See also APHORISM	
RUSTIC DIALOGUE	An eclogue in which two "rude swains" engage in banter, perhaps over a mistress, perhaps over their flocks.	THH, 160	See ECLOGUE	
SAGA	An historical legend developed by oral tradition until it was popularly accepted as true--a form lying between authentic history and intentional fiction; any traditional tale in prose of	THH, 434.	See also EPIC, LEGEND, ROMANCE, TALE	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
	heroic achievement or extraordinary or marvelous adventure.		
SAINT'S PLAY			See MIRACLE PLAY
SATIRE	A literary manner which blends a critical attitude whith humor and wit to the end that human institutions or humanity may be improved.	THH, 436.	See also HORATIAN SATIRE, JUVENALIAN SATIRE, PARODY, TRAVESTY, BURLESQUE
SATIRIC COMEDY	A comedy which attacks the disorders of society by making ridiculous the violators of its standards of morals or manners.	Abrams, 26.	See also COMEDY, SATIRE
SATYR PLAY	An ancient Greek drama, a ribald burlesque presenting a chorus of satyrs.	Shaw, 333.	See also BURLESQUE
SCENARIO	A brief outline of a drama, indicating the entrances of the main characters and the sequence of the action. All that is needed in the way of a script when the dialogue is to be improvised, as it was in the commedia dell'arte dramas.	Abrams, 28.	
SCIENCE FICTION	A form of fantasy in which scientific facts, assumptions, or hypotheses form the basis, by logical extrapolation, of adventures in the future, on other planets, in other dimensions in time, or under new variants of scientific law.	THH, 444.	See also FANTASY

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
SCRIPTURE	The sacred writings of any religion; the books of the Old or New Testaments.	RHD.	See also BIBLE	
SEA CHANTEY			See CHANTEY	
SENECAN TRAGEDY	A play modeled after those of the Roman playwright Seneca. The play is fully developed in five acts, with a complex plot and a formal and elaborate style of dialogue. The original Senecan tragedies were written to be recited rather than acted. In the Elizabethan age, Senecan drama had two main lines of development: the "academic tragedy" and the "revenge tragedy."	Abrams, 174.	See also TRAGEDY, ACADEMIC TRAGEDY, REVENGE TRAGEDY	
SENTIMENTAL COMEDY	A middle class reaction against the immorality of situation and the frequent indecency of dialogue in the courtly Restoration comedy resulted in the sentimental comedy of the 18th century. Revived the wit and gaiety, but deleted the indecency, of Restoration comedy.	Abrams, 26-27.	Synonym: DRAMA OF SENSIBILITY See also COMEDY, COMEDY OF MANNERS, RESTORATION COMEDY	
SENTIMENTAL NOVEL	A novel of the eighteenth century that emphasized the tearful distresses of the virtuous, either at their own sorrows of those of their friends.	Abrams, 88.	Synonym: NOVEL OF SENSIBILITY See also NOVEL	
	A novel in which the characters have a heightened and highly emotional response to events, actions, and sentiments. The author attempts to produce in the reader a similar heightened emotional response to actions.	THH, 324.		

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
SERENADE	A sentimental composition, written as though intended to be sung out of doors at night under a lady's window and in praise of a loved one.	THH, 452.	See also SONG
SERMON	A religious discourse delivered in public usually by a clergyman as a part of a worship service.		See also HOMILY
SESTINA	A poem of six six-line stanzas and an envoy of three lines. A complicated, difficult verse form involving repetition in each stanza of words arranged in different order from their appearance in preceding stanzas.	Shaw, 340.	
SHAKESPEAREAN SONNET			See ENGLISH SONNET
SHADOW PLAY			
SHORT SHORT STORY	A one- or two-page short story.		See SHORT STORY
SHORT STORY	A work of prose fiction, differing from the anecdote--the simple and unelaborated narration of a single incident--in that it organizes the action, thought, and interactions of its characters into the artful pattern of a plot; differs from the novel in being shorter and thus limited both in the effects that can be achieved and in the choice and management of the elements to achieve those effects.	Abrams, 159.	See also TALE, SHORT SHORT STORY, NOVEL, ANECDOTE, PARABLE, INCIDENT, FABLE, EPIC, SKETCH

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
SINGING MATCH	Two shepherds have a singing contest on a wager or for a prize, a third shepherd acting as judge.	THH, 160.	See ECLOGUE, RUSTIC DIALOGUE
SKELTONIC VERSE	A rollicking form of verse employed by the English poet John Skelton, consisting of short lines rhymed in groups of varying length, intentionally designed to give the effects of unconventionality and lack of dignity; often satirical.	THH, 461.	Synonym: SKELTONICS, TUMBLING VERSE See also DOGGEREL, SATIRE
SKETCH	A brief composition simply constructed and usually most unified in that it presents a single scene, a single character, a single incident. Lacks developed plot or any very great characterization.	THH, 426.	See also SHORT STORY, ANECDOTE
SLAPSTICK	Broad comedy characterized by violent and boisterous action; farce combined with horseplay in a comic form.	Shaw, 347-348.	See also COMEDY, FARCE
SOCIOLOGICAL NOVEL	A novel emphasizing the influence of social and economic conditions on characters and events; often it also embodies an implicit or explicit thesis recommending social reform.	Abrams, 113.	See also NOVEL, PROPAGANDA NOVEL, HUMANITARIAN NOVEL
SONG	A lyric poem adapted to musical expression. Song lyrics are usually short, simple, sensuous, emotional--perhaps the most spontaneous lyric form.	THH, 464.	See also LYRIC

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
SONNET	A lyric poem written in a single stanza, which consists of fourteen iambic pentameter lines linked by an intricate rhyme scheme.	Abrams, 159.	See also LYRIC, ENGLISH SONNET, ITALIAN SONNET, SONNET SEQUENCE, SPENSERIAN SONNET	
SONNET SEQUENCE	A series of sonnets linked together by exploring various aspects of a relationship between lovers, or by indicating a development in that relationship which constitutes a kind of implicit plot.	Abrams, 161.	See also SONNET	
SPACE FICTION				
SPENSERIAN SONNET	A sonnet that resembles the English sonnet but in which each quatrain is linked to the next by a continuing rhyme: abab bcbc cdcd ee.	Abrams, 160.	See also SONNET, ENGLISH SONNET	
STORY OF CHARACTER	A story which focuses on the revelation of a state of mind and motivation, or of moral qualities.	Abrams, 158.	See also SHORT STORY, TALE	
STORY OF INCIDENT			See TALE	
STREAM-OF-CONSCIOUSNESS NOVEL	The type of psychological novel which takes as its subject matter the uninterrupted, uneven, and endless flow of consciousness of one or more of its characters.	THH, 471.	See also NOVEL, PSYCHOLOGICAL NOVEL	
TAIL-RHYME ROMANCE	Metrical romances employing the tail-rhyme stanza	THH, 482.	See also METRICAL ROMANCES	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
TALE	A story in which the focus of interest is on the course and outcome of the events.	Abrams, 158.	Synonym: STORY OF INCIDENT See also SHORT STORY, STORY OF CHARACTER, ANECDOTE, SKETCH, TALL TALE
TALL TALE	A kind of humorous tale common on the American frontier, which uses realistic detail, a literal manner, and common speech to recount extravagantly impossible happenings, usually resulting from the superhuman abilities of a character.	THH, 482.	See also TALE, SHORT STORY
TANKA	A form of Japanese poetry similar to the haiku. Consists of 31 syllables arranged in five lines.	Shaw, 372.	See also HAIKU
TESTAMENT	(1) a "last will and testament" (2) a piece of literature which "bears witness to" or "makes a covenant with" in the Biblical sense.	THH, 485.	See also APOLOGY
THEATER OF THE ABSURD	An avant-garde style of playwriting and presentation in which conventions of structure, plot, and characterization are ignored or distorted. An irrational quality of nature is stressed, and man's isolation and aloneness are made central elements of conflict.	Shaw, 377.	See also DRAMA, BLACK COMEDY

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
THESIS	A formal, involved exposition written to clarify some scholarly problem, and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a bachelor's or master's degree. Theses are more limited in range, and shorter usually, than dissertations.	THH, 146.	See also DISSERTATION
THRENODY			See DIRGE
TRACT	A propagandistic treatise on some religious or political topic.	THH, 487.	See also PROPAGANDISTIC LITERATURE
TRADITIONAL BALLAD			See POPULAR BALLAD
TRADITIONAL EPIC	An epic shaped by a literary artist from historical and legendary materials which had developed in the oral traditions of his nation during a period of expansion and warfare.	Abrams, 49.	Synonyms: PRIMARY EPIC, FOLK EPIC See also EPIC, LITERARY EPIC
TRAGEDY	Literary, especially dramatic, representations of serious and important actions which turn out disastrously for the chief character.	Abrams, 173.	See also SENECAN TRAGEDY, REVENGE TRAGEDY, ACADEMIC TRAGEDY, TRAGEDY OF BLOOD, BOURGEOIS TRAGEDY
TRAGEDY OF BLOOD	The revenge tragedy in its most sensational form.	Abrams, 174.	See also SENECAN TRAGEDY, REVENGE TRAGEDY

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS	
TRAGICOMEDY	A type of Eliazbethan and Jacobean drama which mingled both the subject matter and the forms of traditional tragedy and comedy: (1) Its important characters included both people of high degree and people of low degree. According to the reigning critical theory, only upper-class characters were appropriate to tragedy, while members of the lower classes were the proper subjects of comedy. (2) It consisted in a serious action which threatened a tragic disaster to the protagonist, yet, by an abrupt change of circumstance, ended happily.	Abrams, 176-177.	See also TRAGEDY, COMEDY	
TRAVESTY	A variety of low burlesque that, like the parody, mocks a particular work, but does so by treating its lofty subject in a jocular and undignified manner and style.	Abrams, 19.		
TRILOGY	A literary composition, more usually a novel or play, written in three parts, each of which is in itself a complete unit. Usually written against a large background which may be historical, philosophical, or social in its interests.	THH, 495.	See also NOVEL, DRAMA	
TRIOLET	One of the simplest French verse forms. Consists of eight lines, the first two being repeated as the last two lines and the first	THH, 495.		

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
TRIOLET (cont'd)	recurring also as the fourth line. There are only two rhymes, arranged abaaabab.		
TROPE	An amplification of the liturgical text, sometimes in prose, sometimes in verse, sometimes purely musical, sometimes requiring dialogue, presented antiphonally by the two parts of the church choir. The liturgical drama developed from the dialogue form of the trope.	THH, 496.	See also LITURGICAL DRAMA, MEDIEVAL DRAMA
TUMBLING VERSE			See SKELTONIC VERSE
UTOPIA	A type of fiction which represents an ideal political state and way of life. Named after Sir Thomas More's Utopia (1515-1516).	Abrams, 177.	See also FANTASY, SCIENCE FICTION
VARRONIAN SATIRE			See MENIPPEAN SATIRE
VAUDEVILLE	An entertainment consisting of successive performances of unrelated songs, dances, dramatic sketches, acrobatic feats, juggling, pantomime, puppet-shows, and various stunts.	THH, 502-503.	See also PANTOMIME, SKETCH, LOW COMEDY, BURLESQUE, FARCE
VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ			See LIGHT VERSE
VERS LIBRE			See FREE VERSE
VERSE	Language patterned into recurrent units of meter.	Abrams, 139.	

TERM	DEFINITION	REFERENCE	RELATED WORDS
VILLANELLE	A French verse form calculated, through its complexity and artificiality, to give an impression of simplicity and spontaneity. Characterized by nineteen lines divided into five tercets and a final four-line stanza, and the presence of only two rhymes: aba aba aba aba aba abba.	THH, 505.	
WESTERN NOVEL	The traditional Western pits bad guys against good guys, depicts a long and dramatic chase or pursuit, and ends with the good guys bloody but victorious. The usual setting is a short main street in a frontier village.	Shaw, 400.	See also NOVEL, ADVENTURE STORY
WESTERN STORY			See WESTERN NOVEL

APPENDIX C

A Taxonomy of Generic Terms*

- Prose
  - Non-fiction
    - Informative /Press and Periodical/
      - Article
        - Editorial
          - Individual column
          - Institutional editorial
          - Letter to the editor
        - Reportage
          - Cultural article
          - Financial article
          - Political article
          - Society article
          - Spot news article
          - Sports article
        - Review
          - Art review
          - Book review
          - Dance review
          - Film review
          - Music review
          - Play review
          - TV review
    - Learned /Article, Book, Dissertation, Thesis/
      - Behavioral science
        - Anthropology
        - Economics
        - Education
        - Psychology
        - Sociology
      - Humanities
        - Art
        - History
        - Linguistics
        - Literature
          - Exegesis
        - Music
        - Philosophy
      - Life sciences
        - Biology
        - Chemistry
        - Medicine
      - Law
      - Mathematics

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*Many of the non-fiction prose categories have been taken from a table described by W.N. Francis in "A Standard Corpus of Edited Present-Day American English for Computer Use," Proceedings, IBM Literary Data Conference, 9-11 September 1964, pp. 79-89.

- Physical science
  - Geography
  - Geology
  - Physics
- Political science

Biographical

- Autobiographical
  - Apology (Defense)
  - Autobiography
  - "Confession"
  - Diary (Journal)
    - Public
    - Private
  - Memoir
  - "Testament"
- Biographical
  - Biography
    - Hagiography

Essay

- Anecdotal essay
- Aphoristic essay
- Biographical essay
- Causerie
- Character sketch
- Critical essay
- Descriptive essay
- Didactic essay
  - Moralizing essay
- Editorial essay
- Epigrammatic essay
- Historical essay
- Humorous essay
- Letter
  - Business letter
  - Epistle
  - Friendly letter
  - Invitation
  - Letter to the editor
  - Thank you letter
- Narrative essay
- Nature essay
- Periodical essay
- Personal essay (Familiar essay)
- Psychological essay
- Reflective essay
- Topical essay

Miscellaneous

- Longer written forms
  - Advertisement
  - Blurb
  - Etiquette book (Courtesy book)
  - Government document
    - Ballot
    - Bill
    - By-laws

- Constitution
- Decalogue
- Edict
- Law
- Proclamation

Foundation report
House organ
Industry report
Law document
- Brief
- Law case

Religious document
- Bull
- Catechism
- Edict
- Encyclical

Resume'
Scholarly paper
- Dissertation
- Thesis

Summary (Epitome)
Political paper
- Pamphlet
- Tract

Brief written forms
- Adage (Maxim, Apothegm)
- Aphorism
- Bon mot
- Epigram
- Epitaph
- Proverb
- Rune

Periodic written forms
- Almanac (Prognostications, Calendar, Ephemerides)
- Annual
- Chronicle
  - Annals

Oral forms /Speech, Oration/
- Anathema
- "Cry"
- Eulogy (Panegyric, Encomium)
- Homily
- Phillipic
- Sermon

Collections
- Ana
- Analecta
- Anthology
- Chapbook
- Commonplace book
- Dictionary
- Encyclopedia
- Gift book
- Hornbook
- Jest book (Joke book)

Fiction
- Tale (Story of incident)
  - Anecdote (Sketch)
  - Allegory
  - Dream vision
  - Fable (Apologue)
    - Beast fable /Collection=Beast epic (Animal epic)/
    - Bestiary
    - Parable
      - Exemplum
  - Fabliau
  - Gest
  - Folktale
    - Tall tale
    - Fable
    - Fairy tale (Märchen)
  - Legend (Saga)
  - Myth
  - Prose romance
    - Medieval romance
      - Chivalric romance
        - Arthurian legend
    - Pastoral romance
    - Picaresque narrative
  - Novella
- Short story /Shorter form: Short short story; Longer form: Novelette/
  - Adventure story
  - Detective story
  - Frame story (story-within-a-story)
  - Humorous story
  - Local color story
  - Mystery story
  - Story of character
  - Western story
- Novel
  - Adventure novel
  - Anti-novel
  - Apprenticeship novel
    - Bildungsroman
    - Erziehungsroman
  - Autobiographical novel
  - Cloak and dagger novel
  - Epistolary novel
  - Gothic novel (Gothic romance)
  - Historical novel
    - Novel of manners
  - Humanitarian novel (Sociological novel)
  - Künstlerroman ("Artist-novel")
  - Mystery novel
    - Detective novel
  - New novel
  - Novel of character
  - Novel of incident

Picaresque novel
Problem novel
Propaganda novel
Realistic novel
Local color novel
Regional novel
Novel of the soil
Roman à clef
Roman à these
Roman fleuve
Romantic novel
Science fiction novel
Sentimental novel (Novel of sensibility)
Serial Novel
Cliff hanger
Stream-of-consciousness novel
Utopian novel
Western novel
Compound forms
Cycle
Trilogy
Miscellaneous forms
Closet drama
Comic book
Comic strip
Scripture
Bible

Drama
Comedy
Artificial comedy
Comedy of manners
Restoration comedy
Court comedy
Black comedy
Bourgeois comedy
Comedy of humors
Comedy of intrigue (Comedy of situation)
Commedia dell'arte
Harlequinade
Masked comedy (Mummery)
Greek comedy
Satyr play
High comedy
Comedy of manners
Low comedy
Farce-comedy
Atellana fabula
Satyr play
Slapstick
Vaudeville
Mime
Musical comedy
Realistic comedy

- Romantic comedy
- Satiric comedy
- Sentimental comedy (Drama of sensibility, Genteel comedy)
- Tragicomedy

Tragedy
- Bourgeois tragedy (Domestic tragedy)
- Classical tragedy (Heroic tragedy)
- Elizabethan tragedy
  - Academic tragedy
  - Revenge tragedy
    - Tragedy of blood
- Greek tragedy
- Melodrama
- Romantic tragedy
  - Elizabethan tragedy

Drama
- Discussion play
- Drame
- Folk drama
  - Pastoral drama
- History play
  - Chronicle play
- Kabuki
- Medieval drama (Pageant, Liturgical drama, Religious drama)
  - Miracle play (Saint's play)
  - Morality play
  - Mystery play
    - Corpus Christi play
  - Trope
  - Noh play
- Problem play
- Theater of the absurd

Opera
- Ballad opera
- Comic opera (Operetta)
  - Opéra bouffe
- Grand opera
- Light opera

Entertainments
- Extravaganza
- Masque
  - Anti-masque
- Pageant
- Revue
- Vaudeville

Short forms
- Droll
- Entr'acte
- Interlude
- Monologue
- One-act play

Non-verbal forms
- Pantomime (Dumb show, Mummery)

Poetry
- Narrative
  - Ballad
    - Art ballad (Literary ballad)
    - Broadside ballad
    - Folk ballad (Popular ballad, Traditional ballad)
  - Dramatic poetry
    - Comic poetic drama
    - Tragic poetic drama
  - Epic (Heroic poem)
    - Art epic (Literary epic)
    - Chanson de geste
    - Mock epic (Mock heroic peom)
    - Old English poetry
    - Romantic epic
    - Traditional epic (Folk epic, Primary epic)
  - Lai
    - Breton lay
  - Metrical romance
    - Tail-rhyme romance
- Lyric
  - Adonic verse
  - Anacreontic poetry
  - Art lyric
    - Ballade
    - Cavalier lyric
    - Rondel
    - Roundel
    - Roundelay
    - Roundeau
    - Triolet
    - Villanelle
  - Aubade
  - Chant royal
  - Complaint
  - Cubist poetry
  - Dirge
    - Monody
    - Threnody
  - Dramatic lyric (Lyrical drama)
  - Elegy
    - Pastoral elegy
  - Georgic
  - Haiku (Hokku)
  - Jeremiad
  - Lament (Plaint)
  - Light verse (Vers de société)
    - Abecedarius
    - Alphabet verse
    - Cavalier lyric
    - Clerihew
    - Echo verse
    - Epigram
    - Goliardic verse
    - Hudibrastic verse

- Jingle
- Limerick
- Nonsense verse
  - Macaronic verse
- Nursery rhyme (Children's verse)
- Skeltonics (Tumbling verse)

Madrigal
Nocturne
Occasional poem
- Epithalamion (Bridal song)

Ode
- Alcaics
- Dithyrambic verse
- Horatian ode
- Irregular ode
- Regular ode (Pindaric ode)

Pastoral poetry (Bucolic poetry, Idyl)
- Eclogue
  - Dirge
  - Eulogy
  - Love-lay
  - Rustic dialogue
  - Singing match
- Pastoral elegy
- Pastourelle

Psalm
Sapphic
Sestina
Song (Chanson)
- Anthem
- Antiphon
- Canticle
- Catch
- Canzone
- Chant
  - Requiem
- Chantey (Shanty, Sea Chantey)
- Charivari (Shivaree)
- College song
  - Alma mater
  - Fight song
- Coronach
- Ditty
- Folk song
  - Carol
    - Christmas carol
  - Children's game song
  - Drinking song
  - Hymn
  - Love song
  - Sea chantey
  - Work song
- Hymn
- Love song
  - Canzo

Lullaby
Madrigal
Paean
Patter song
Plain song
Round
Serenade
Sonnet /Collection=Crown of sonnets, Sonnet sequence/
English sonnet (Shakespearean sonnet)
Italian sonnet (Petrarchan sonnet)
Spenserian sonnet
Miscellaneous
Acrostic (Cabal)
Cento
Débat
Prose poem
Poetry incorporating visual elements
Carmen figuratum
Emblem
Pure poetry
Vers libre
Satire
Burlesque
High burlesque
Mock epic
Parody
Low burlesque
Hudibrastic poem
Travesty
Caricature
Formal satire (Direct satire)
Horatian satire
Juvenalian satire
Indirect satire
Menippean satire (Varronian satire, Anatomy)
Lampoon
Literature (Broad terms encompassing both prose and verse, fiction and non-fiction)
Belles-letters
Bourgeois literature
Costume piece
Didactic literature
Folklore
Propagandistic literature
Satire